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GEMINY OF VIPERS.

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A DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS.

BY A. H. HICKERSON.

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A DRAMA.

IN FOUR ACTS.

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A. H. HICKERSON.

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A GEMINY OF VIPERS.

BY A. H. HICKERSON.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SEBASTIAN, father to Roderick.
 HUMPHREY, uncle to Theophilus.
 RODERICK, an infidel, in love with Eudora.
 LUBIN, his friend.
 THEOPHILUS, suitor to Eudora.
 ALPHONSO, servant to Roderick.
 SALMON, servant to Theophilus.
 GERSHOM, a hermit.
 PIKE, }
 PEAK, } Gershom's imps. Other imps.
 POKE, }

ORESTES, friend to Humphrey.
 ANTONIA, mother to Roderick.
 EUDORA, a rich heiress.
 ADESSA, her waiting maid.

A Messenger.

Guards, Attendants, etc.

SCENE: *Greece.*

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Open court in front of Sebastian's house.*

Enter SEBASTIAN, LUBIN, HUMPHREY and THEOPHILUS.

Sebas. Crown'd be the billowy seas
 with caps of valorous strife;
 Surged high midst the sprays of glitter-
 ing toil enfold;
 Seethed fathomless in eddying conten-
 tion by brainless antic;
 So my thoughts play their antics in mind
 troubled even at repose.
 Sun is there none to an age when sun-
 shine might dwell
 Like purity on sin, casting sin out as tor-
 tures from hell.
 Life is there none to a life whose advance
 points with pride
 Backward to one sunless morn as they
 lay side by side.
 My son of that morn bursting out from
 the clouds of the womb
 Made woman a mother, has sent man
 nigh to his tomb.
 Full-plenished, fair-clad, bright-visag'd,
 with ill-fitting smile,
 Grace I the greetings of dear friends;
 yet dare I the while
 Abate heart beneath it, clad cheerless in
 hope that doth kill

Sweet happiness. Friends, bear with me
 pray, 'tis a son's froward will.

Lub. Your mind is uneasy in strife
 made conflicting,
 Because of a son's froward will, so de-
 picting
 Thine own.

Factions have fellows else there were no
 strife,

So you are a fellow to this one now rife.

Hum. Yet just is the cause as strong
 the strife,

As thou canst weigh it to its full, just
 weight,

And find no diminish, no increment
 there;

A father deep-pitted 'gainst a son once
 so fair,

Now set in contention—a Tyro arose
 From a mightier source to greet many
 foes;

And 'sconced in such power to scatter
 alarm,

It reacheth the father to do him this
 harm:

The father ensconced on the side which
 is right,

Cannot strike nor defend 'gainst his son
 in the fight.

Theo. Now friends, if ye be friends, or
 be not friends,

So foes: pray now, appease me. Stand-
 ing here,

I am a hungered like a ravenous wolf,
Catching at flying morsels aimed at him;
And so in snappish humor for a bit,
Stand I myself for just one gracious grain
Of information dropped 'twixt rambling
bits

Of thy mysterious talk still unappeased.
Through snapping at the fragments of thy
speech,

I fear I make myself a well-worn fag,
Though fag I well might be for aught my
ears

Do bring me.

In short, my friends, thy meaningless
words

Speak to me a meaningless tale.

Sebas.

Now how a tale

Can strike such havoc to my heart, elud-
ing ears

So long and pert as these of friend The-
ophilus,

Is past my comprehension.

Lub.

Why, that's it;

They are too large by many cubits drawn
To harbor, and contain, much less con-
ceive

A sound so shallow small, as thy vast
story

Doth reverberate.

Hum. Or hath he not a feather in his
ear,

That pricketh him to senseless humor of
a tale

In its true real significance?

Theo. Thou mockest me with jest not
justly got;

Therefore, alas, not friends, but foes I've
got.

Lub. What ho! he hears, but hearing
would upbraid

Us for a merry jest disposed on him
In a light and passing humor for a joke,
Bestowed in friendly recompense alone
In payment to a pair of outward ears,
And for it get receipt returned again
In only swift reproach.

Sebas.

Come friends, I fear

Our humor will forsake us to deny
A friendship erstwhile deeply felt by all.
So while away such purposed railery
On those for whom you harbor not,
In sweet-toned entertainment, stanchion-
love

Whereon a friend does lie.

'Tis not a thing well done in friendship's
sphere,

To prick a friendly heart by words severe,
Languaged 'gainst words unwilling spoke.

Lub.

What hear!

The grave Sebastian wisely speaks such
fear;

So wisely heed, our friendship not to
sear.

Theo. Well then, if thou'rt so decided,
pray let me hear

Thy story plain withal, despite my bung-
ling ear.

Sebas. Well, be it so. The story runs
like this:

I have a son as you my friends all know,
As thou know'st, too, Theophilus, and
that much

To thy great sorrow, touching which
mine ears

Have served me better even than thine
own,

In that a tale purporting so to be
Of this same good Theophilus reacheth
them,

By way of quaint vague catchings at odd
times

Of certain frivolous rumors now afloat,
Which, now that they've had mention,

might as well

Be said again as left unsaid, swell not,
To my crude way of thinking, in thy
breast

A bitterness one whit too sore or small,
In any kind proportion or rude touch,

Swaying it to a lighter or heavier make,
To add or take away in present mood

A humor so befitting but that thou
Wert grievous sad as 'twere thy wont to
be,

In just effect of cause so justly great.

Theo. If this be all thy story to be told,
Pray quit its sad narration, for its humor

More than scorseth me to a living coal,
Only to leave me in a shaking ague

When 'tis done, and so, by turns, before
I catch a breath to say which vast ex-
treme

I stand demented in, I'm now hot beast,
Now ice-cold stone—dementing incon-
gruity.

Sebas. Why then, thou'rt truly as re-
port doth make

Of thee—

A very mad, amphibian sort of fellow,
Ready to singe thy neighbors by a look,

Or freeze them by a touch.

Theo. Allow me then

To freeze thee from the and thou art so
Disposed to ever show in railing me,

Heating thee by all entreating looks
To immediate continuance of thy tale.

Lub. Why hark ye now, Sebastian, my
good friends,

Theophilus turneth wit to goodly ends.
Hum. And turning more a wit to good-
ly ways,

He merely speaks of touch and beaming
gaze.

Lub. And turns himself, a man of goodly sense
To meet our own poor wit.

Sebas. Why then, I'll recompense
Such wit, as it should be rewarded, I
Will finish now my tale.

Tho Say rather, thou
Wilt put a tail to it; for as to thy finishing it,
It were a better tail thus added than
A tale not told.

Sebas. Say as to my finishing it, it were
A better tale thus told, than tail not
added;

For I'll not add a tail to tale that still
Remains no tale.

Lub. Now ne'er did anything come in
so well.

For I bethink me, by a sudden coming in
Of truant memory, that I have urgent
business,

Even at this hour, which, to meet well,
In opportune arrival at my appointment,
Entaileth now my quick departure hence.
Sebastian, I'll not wait to hear thy tale,
Since hearing it withal, 'twould be but
that

I've heard before in many-mouthed syllables.

So then, adieu, until to-morrow; *
I will see you then.

Hum. How, now. It seems to be the
order to be tailed;

Therefore, Lubin, if thou hast none, I'll be
Thy tail, and follow thee behind, to make
For thee a pretty wag, and stay with thee
Till thou dost cut me off, that, when thou
dost,

I'll bleed sad tears, and wag no more a
tail

Of sweet submissive friendship at thy
back,

But offended will I die.

Adieu, Sebastian! My dear nephew, dine
with me at eight,

Meanwhile hark thou to what Sebastian
will relate.

Sebas. Kind friends, adieu to both,
I'll see you both upon the morrow,
I trust in mood of better cheer.

[*Exeunt Lubin and Humphrey.*

Enter RODERICK.

Rod. What now! was that my dear
friend Lubin

Methought I heard in parle with others
wrought,

Who has just now escaped before my very
nose,

Outwitting my endeavors to o'ertake him
ere he leave?

Why 'tis his very shadow I do see retreat,

As who could not detect a saintly form
By saintish shadow sprawl'd upon the
ground,

A thing too humble much to stand erect,
Proclaiming his own goodness; be it so,
I'll call good Lubin back; what Lubin, ho!

Lub. [*From without*] Who calls?

Rod [*Aside*] Now this were, in good
point of truth,

A pretty twain of wagging hypocrites,
Standing to each with back to belly wag'd,
As though the one were misadjusted tail
Screw'd on the other for a certain use,
But useless it hangs dead to its true func-
tion.

Well, so these christian braggarts are
begot,

Like strings of useless, ever-dragging
tails,

And so all tails, no heads.

[*To Lubin*] Thy true friend, Roderick,
calls for thy return.

Canst thou not come?

Lub. [*From without*] Believe me, Rod-
erick,

It doth grieve me more to leave thee

'Gainst thy express'd desire to stay,

Than I expect to find relief from

In the purpose of my stray;

Or forget the pangs of merely

By my doings whilst away.

Thy love will be just supporter

To mine own the livelong day,

And the love I bear thee, Roderick,

Is a love that comes to stay.

Therefore though I now must leave thee

Grace my absence as you may,

Loving as I love, dear Roderick,

Grace it thus, of thee I pray.

Rod. Were he not christian, I could
love him more,

Yet being christian, I cannot love him
less.

Thus 'tis a strange fantastic wooing of

The mind to heart, and of the heart to
mind,

Sets strife afloat most bitter in rebellious-
ness

To adversary parts of love and hate,
Plung'd deep in one poor soul to make
him miserable—

What news with thee, my father?

Sebas. None withal, save that which
grieveth me;

Though this were news not new, I know,
to thee;

For the which thou hast to thank the
prattle

Of a father's grief-lash'd tongue.

Rod. [*Aside*] Can the heart of a
parent be pierced to greater agony than

this inflicted by a parent's censorious tongue made so with grief?

Theophilus, dost thou fare well?

Theo. As fairly well as might be, save for a surfeit

Of bad dreams by night, and worse thoughts through the day.

Rod. Perchance such state comes as effect from a foul liver,

And thou hast over-bile contained in thee, Which wants a purge or so to counteract Its vile influence o'er thy other parts.

Were I a doctor of old brittle bones, I'd fix thee such prescription right and good,

As would soon teach to thee the meaning true

Of good sound health, and make thee swift forget

The meaning of foul parts.

But being only of the common kind, I only can commend thee to thy God.

Theo. Thou speak'st as though thou mock'st His sacred name,

Which ill-becomes a man in any state, Much more in thine whose altitude, like that

Of mighty Everett, pinnacles on high Thy lesser neighbor's crests.

Sebas. [*Aside*] Why, hark to them! I'll let them at it now,

And thus Theophilus soon my tale will know.

Rod. Now thou'rt a wily wag with wagging tongue.

'Tis from this great advantage I do speak, The vantage-ground of high indifferent rank,

Whose summit shrouds me from rude scrutiny,

Whilst I, secure, look down on other's faults.

Theo. Would'st thou be a God?

Rod. Nay; nor would I have a God.

Theo. What, an infidel! Why man, thou art usurper of the very breath thou drawest, and cannot call it thine, but for the sanction of a God.

Rod. Now he that hath a question in his mind

That I can blow a breath in lusty gale As strong as any christian ever dare, Why bring him forth, my good Theophilus;

And if he do out-blow me in the test, Straightway I'll turn christian.

Theo. It is true, I know thou art a blower of strong words,

So long as they be aimed at credulous ears,

But there's a power unseen yet not unseen,

Unfelt though felt, unheard of; nay, but heard

By every listening ear that hath a soul At welfare, which, like Æolus in his cave, Thou wilt some day have chance to blow against

In strumpet blasts of shattering condemnation,

Until thy very liver turneth pale From hollow torment, and thy tongue hang out,

Distorted, swollen, black, but for the application

Of one poor drop to comfort thee.

Rod. Well, teach me how to be a christian.

I stand as docile as a child at lesson, Ready to be taught.

Theo. As docile as a wolf;

I would as lief teach docile wolf as ferine child.

Rod. Is this thy hard belief?

I had it in my mind a christian had a part, Each part to be performed, not as a duty picked,

Or willed so suiting the performer; but rather,

In submission through a love thou call'st divine,

Which purports to descend from one—called God.

Theo. Thou'rt right; thou quotest our belief as though

Thou wert even one of us, and used this means

Of playful prodigality to guage thy friends

To a higher, juster level of appreciation Of thy worth, whose quality, truly spoke, Doth well deserve it.

Rod. O, christian flatterer!

What vein of christian charity contrives To grant thee leave to flatter one like me, Whose atheism flings back scorn to thee.

But then if I have said your creed aright, Thou art thyself, in turn, in greater wrong,

So cease in this behalf thy joys to gratulate.

I may be many things but when I'm prodigal,

My prodigality will go waste in some other direction.

I'll be stoned dead before I'll be a hypocrite,

Who, with his sick'ning, simulating ways, Love-beaming face, sweet-smiling lips and eyes,

And blackest devil's heart in deep disguise,

Makes wise men fools and fools most wondrous wise;

Harsh mimicry to instincts of a soul
Whose ever present thought is set in
truth;

Sweet joy to him who smirks with Janus-
face

To gauge the deed to a devil's winning
grace.

No, no: of all mean things on earth to
me,

The meanest of them all I'll never be:
I'll never be a hypocrite.

Theo. But this thou wilt,
Thou may'st be many things from out
the which

Allow me make fair choice just what
thou art.

If thou'rt not hypocrite, of other things
That may be worse, or may be not so bad,
Thou art that which makes thy friends
truly sad;

Thou art an unbeliever.

Rod. Oh, my poor friends!
Now you have cut me deep with the un-
sheath'd dagger

Of remorse, struck ruthlessly in my con-
science,

Rankling there a bitterer reproach. Oh,
hated war

Of troubled ragings, wrest from soft-
suag'd love

A love for me that I may, cradled low,
Fall fast in beauteous sleep on cupid's
arms,

To dream of my poor friends so loving
me.

Theo. There is a way to gain their kind-
est love

If thou see'st fit to take it.

Rod. Name the way.

Theo. By giving up thy ways.

Rod. Why, then will I
Be friendless evermore. Give up my ways
To tread a darker course?

Theo. A lighter course.
Thou art thyself engulf'd in darkest night,
And groping on do stumble in sad plight.

Rod. Well, thou with kindness kindly
aimed at me,

Hast lighted me beyond obscurity.

I need not fear if harmful pitfalls lay
In lurking ambush dangerous to my way,

Since by the candle of thy kind advice
My path's illumined though I have no
eyes

To see my course. I'd have it otherwise.

Theo. You turn a grave theme to a jest.
Rod. With joy I would now thee infest.

Theo. To counteract thine own sad
breast?

Rod. No; give thee joy, 'tis my behest.

Theo. To give thee joy is my request.

Rod. And make thy heart quite sore
distress'd?

Theo. Ay! that thine own will ne'er be
blest.

Rod. So thou canst meet a jest with
jest.

Theo. And meeting it give you the best.

Rod. And greeting it give you no rest.

Theo. I'll have the last word. I'm
your guest.

Rod. So like a bird you're in my nest.

Theo. And like a bird I'd be caress'd.

Rod. Such boyish actions I detest.

Theo. Yet thou would'st fain grace thy
conquest

With gentle touch on lady's breast.

And so I do outjest you.

Rod. And so you turn a passing jest

In graver mood to one thus less'd

Of lighter tenor framed.

So now I do outwit you.

Theo. Well, but this is jest, not wit.

Rod. But what is wit but jest unwrit?

Theo. A jest is rude, a wit is keen.

Thy ways are rude; this I have seen.

Rod. I pray thee now, what dost thou
mean?

Theo. I mean thy life is built upon a
jest,

In jest thou liv'st as in a grewsome jest
Thou wilt soon die to dwell in warmer
clime:

But I'll tell you of this another time.

Rod. Would'st leave me in such dire
confliction?

Theo. It were better thus to leave thee,
Than in a fat and rolling condition
Of contentment, too pleased with thine
own self

To give unto thyself a thought save that
Born of contentment. Adieu, Sebastian,
Fare you well. I leave thee now with
thy son.

God be with thee and him.

I now know thy sad story and I pity thee,
As I reproach thy son.

Sebas. Fare you well, Theophilus. I am
a good mark for the aim of thy commis-
eration, as my son is for thy scorn.

[Exit Theophilus.]

Rod. Now this were one full funny
freak

Turned out of door as though to seek

Another fellow like him.

But outwitted in the search

Turns back disgusted with the world,

Left sadly in the lurch.

Sebas. Come Roderick, thou dost see
how thy friends

Take thy perverted moods. I pray of
thee

Turn swift away from these, a christian
 be
 With them, with me, and with thy dear
 mother
 Who so loves thee without a like return.
 Thou art to us, to all, as thou stand'st
 here,
 Though a beloved son and well-liked
 friend,
 A thing too loathsome far for us to touch
 In cherishing caress; though beauteous
 in
 Thy moulded form and haughty height,
 as if
 It were the grace of Baldur that crowned
 thee o'er,
 A thing far too disgusting for our eyes
 To dwell upon in feast of that repast
 Thy father and thy mother hunger for.
 O Roderick! feast thou thus two fam-
 ished souls
 Upon the crumbs of thine enforced re-
 generacy.
 Quench their mad thirst with gushing
 waters,
 Fountained from the wells of thy new
 happiness.
 Let thy new life give them new life;
 Thy peace them peace, thy love them
 love,
 Thy heavenly hope them hope of life
 eternal.

Rod. And if there be a devil let him
 have his way,
 Or be a God let Him come into stay?
 No! no! my own sweet master I prefer
 to be,
 I ask no living man to be a slave to me,
 Nor will I be a slave to any man.

Sebas. As thou thyself art greater than
 a toad,
 So stands thy God to thee. Thou art a
 God
 To a poor toad, as it, itself, is nothing but
 a toad to thee.
 Thus God is quite as good a God to thee
 as thou art
 To the toad; and as the toad is loathsome
 to thy sight,
 So thou art loathsome to the sight of God.
 This is the law of all mankind, as 'tis the
 law of God.
 So as a lord to a poor toad,
 Thou art a slave to God.

Rod. I may be slave bound in which
 chains
 I am thus held in love; but I am not a
 slave
 To God or man.

Sebas. Which makes thee more a slave
 To sweet Eudora; for were it otherwise,
 and thou

Didst look to God for thy deliverance,
 Eudora so
 Would look to thee for her support, and
 be thy slave
 Rather than to have you hers, with she
 your master,
 You without a God.

Rod. Dear heart! methinks she would
 Be God enough for me, by whose sweet
 medium,
 Godless as I am, thy heaven in crude
 imagery,
 Must needs be mine here on thy dismal
 earth.

I were content with such a heaven as
 this.

Sebas. Ay! truly would'st thou be, as
 who should not.

There is a heaven in pure Eudora's eyes
 That shines in lustrous azure as from the
 skies;

There is a heaven in dear Eudora's smile
 That gives good cheer to comrades all
 the while;

There is a heaven in all Eudora's ways
 That sets my heart with warm love now
 ablaze;

There is a heaven in good Eudora's soul
 That buoys her high above my poor ex-
 tol;

The grace of heaven enshrines her noble
 heart

With richer grace that ne'er can from
 her part.

Indeed, when thou dost win this heav-
 enly sun,
 Thou wilt be blest—but not till thou hast
 won.

Rod. Would'st thou so taunt me with a
 hampering fear

That I cannot win my Eudora dear?
 Why man, as I do speak I feel it now,
 Valhalla's crown cloistering my brow.

What, thou hast so inflamed me with thy
 prate,
 This minute I'll to her and learn my fate!

[*Exit.*]

Sebas. Now I'll lay wager he does soon
 come back

Like some poor hind awearyed from the
 rack.

But I must haste to sweet Eudora's side,
 Apprising her ere he does me outstride.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II—Room in Eudora's house.

Enter EUDORA and ADESSA.

Ades. How pale you look, sweet lady,
 Are you sick to-day? Your looks pro-
 claim it.

Eud. Do they? Then, Adessa, they do

Practice on deceit in so proclaiming it.
I am not sick; that is, my body's not.

Ades. Yet still, I know you're sick,
Else why this pallid hue on cheek and
neck,

More pallid than this shedding light could
fleck;

Or these sad drooping eye-lids, tearless,
dry,
Bespeaking anxious mind and restless
eye?

Eud. This pallor soft is fleck of twi-
light dim,
As it falls gently from far heaven to
earth,

Spreading a softness o'er harsh, vulgar
men,
To soon conceal their deeds from better
men.

Ades. A pretty answer; but these
drooping eyes?

Eud. Did'st thou, Adessa, e'er note in
the skies
A certain drooping, languid gleam of
light,
Like soft, sad waves, that is best viewed
at night,

Which seems to creep into our lonely
hearts,
As we affrighted gaze transfixed? It
starts

Our very beings. So mine eyes do yearn
And wax quite pensive to thy sure con-
cern.

Ades. A prettier answer yet; but why
should eyes

So yearn that have no cause to yearn?

Eud. Oh! now I see
And mighty arbiter, must I confess
Before my judge, without chance to re-
dress

A grievance, that, pinned to the wall,
leaves me

But one alternative?

Enter SALMON from behind, unnoticed.

Ades. Oh! now I see,
As I knew you were sick, and know it
still,

I know the nature of your malady.

Sweet mistress, you're in love.

Eud. Oh fie! but stay,
If not in love, I am in worser plight.
I am between two loves.

Ades. Between two loves!
And love such fiery stuff; oh, my poor
heart;

Dear madam, you'll be burned.

Eud. I know it would
Be cooler did I stand between two fires,
Since men in love—

Sal. Are such conceitful liars.

Save your grace, fair lady, but I'm just
come

From one of these same makers of a lie,
To herald him to you, to live or die.

Ades. Would you so rude stalk unan-
nounce'd, uncall'd

Into the private presence of a lady,
Like one who knows not manners, what
they are,

But churlish, awkward, rush in at an
hour,

Untimely and inopportune to her,
As though thou would'st with greedy
jaws devour

Two such sweet morsels as my lady and
me?

What would'st thou, man? Thou'lt ne'er
get hold of me,

Nor this sweet lady thou dost see by me.

Sal. If I had thee, I'd sell thee for a
goat,

Then take the money and cast it in a
moat.

If I had that fair lady I would keep
Her safe from harm as a shepherd does
his sheep.

Eud. How now, Adessa, this knave
hath a wit,

And knows which way to aim it so to hit
The rightful target with its wonted
charge;

He wounded thee to death, me not so
large.

Sal. Fair lady, I meant not to wound
thy smell,

Thy taste, thy touch, thine ear, thy
sight, thy face;

But rather meant I simply to foretell
The coming of my master with good
grace.

Eud. Who is thy master, man, and who
art thou?

Sal. His name, fair lady, is in name
plain 'The',

With 'Op' to follow in a 'Hi' old muss,
Then comes low 'lust' in all without the
'T';

In short, my lady, his name's The-ophi-
lus.

I am his servant, Salmon; Salmon at
your service.

Eud. What! that of christian blood?
Is he

Thy master?

Sal. If he have blood, why yes, I've
never

Seen him bleed, but he was bred a chris-
tian:

This I've seen.

Eud. 'Tis he; go bid thy master in;
yet stay!

Stay yet awhile; soft man, I had forgot;
'Tis strange I had forgot that on this day
I plighted answer to this same begot,
And through sheer sympathy for his
christian faith,
Half-promised him—

Ades. Hush! lady, say it not,
If you cannot say it with better cheer.
In your affairs of love, let your heart
speak,

If it do not, 'tis perjury you do swear,
Eud. I know, I know, and I must
swiftly choose

Between two loves; no, three; nay! nay!
'tis four.

Four loves to choose from, and if I should
lose

But one of them, that one which I adore,
I lose my life, and all that it contain.

Now heaven, prepare me that my
strength remain!

Enter THEOPHILUS.

Thou'rt welcome, good Theophilus,
what's thy news?

Theo. My news is something sadly
sweet to me,

As sweetly sad I fain 'twould be to thee,
Coming from a sadly sweet newsmonger.

Eud. Thou'rt sweet as one compared
with whom thou'rt younger;

Thou'rt sad I know not why.

Theo. Then say I'm sad
Because I'm sweet; and sweet because
thy sweetness
Sweetens me.

Eud. 'Twere better then that thou
wert not so sweet,

If sweetness render thee in mood so sad;
For those things sweet which are so
droomy sad

Digest not well, but lie like heavy sponge
Upon the organs of the stomach, breed-
ing certain

Melancholy to a brooding soul.

Theo. Doth my sweet
Sadness breed to thee, my soul, such
Melancholy to thy soul, that thou dost
brood

When I am near to thee?

Eud. No more when thou
Art near than when thou art away.

My sadness comes from elsewhere rather
than

From thee, thy absence, or thy presence.

Theo. Thou art
Grown cold, Eudora, why this mark'd
and strange

Indifference?

Eud. Heaven marketh strangeness in
the air,

Oppressing stillness filling us with dread,

Which heralds to our sense the brewing
storm.

Oh! seek swift refuge from this coming
storm,

Even while this precedent of dead calm
Doth warn thee.

Theo. O God! what is this I hear?
What calm is this that presages a storm?

What storm to follow that the calm por-
tends?

What sad destruction is to be the end?
What miseries to harrow me: extend
My griefs? Dear lady, pray do not sus-
pend

My griefs, my joys, my all upon the
thread

Of thy provoking hesitancy; speak, I'll
know thy will.

Eud. [*Aside*] 'Tis thus I'm forced to
say to him,

What I would fain not say. Why do I
wait?

This coldness hath not answered him; I
would

That love were not so ardent hot, but
that,

To meet a current of cold words that go
In issue from the arctic-frozen region

Of a heart, it might be cooled of its hot
ardor.

Theo. Speak, lady, give me cheer or
death.

Eud. [*Aside*] I cannot give him cheer:
I must not give him death; yet what
have I

To give him but a cheerless death? But
come,

I may as well be brief and have it o'er,
That, like a wound inflicted in a trice,

Its flow half-stanch'd, half-healed, for-
got, before

Its pain is felt, I may annul some pain.
By practicing quick brevity myself.

Therefore, I'll brave myself to speak.

Theo. Thou torturest me, fair lady,
with thy art

Of long postponement. Pray speed me
life or death.

If life, why quick; if death, why quicker
still,

That all my joys may die a single death,
And not a slow one.

Eud. Well, I will pleasure thee;
And since thy mission is a quest of love,

I'll base my answer on the theme of love.
We all do stand upon our own defense,

Defending what is right and what is just,
Protecting those about us who are weak,

Defying those about us who are strong.
There is a pleasure in this justful strife

That warms us ever to a grander fight,

And though crowns victory proudly on
our brows,
Saves him defeated from unjust indigni-
ties.

So let me speak to thee and let thine ears
Ope gently to my speech to kill thy fears.

Luc. I fear my fears will kill me:
pray thee speak.

Eud. Well, if they do let me with pity
meek

Guage thy sad death by sadness of mine
own;

For dying I die too, not through love's
zone,

That binds us with a tie that comes from
'bove,

To soothe us to more willing thoughts of
love,

But rather through warm sympathy.
Dear friend,

Know that I love thee to this self-same
end,

And loving thee, thyself would I impel
Far from the baneful brink of earthly

hell,
That dying thou wilt die not cruel death,

But living thou may'st live, thy indrawn
breath

Sustaining thee through all thy pilgrim-
age,

And all thy strifes in which thou may'st
engage.

I love thy noble heart, sweet-tempered
will,

Thy christian truths, thy pride that doth
instill

Within thy breast an innate honor deep,
Which doth from lewd intent thee ever

keep.
Does this suffice?

Theo. Is this all to be known?
I starve for life, and must yet gnaw a

bone.
Eud. Some say the sweetest, most de-
licious meat

Clings closest to the bone.
Theo. Am I to eat

What I have seen a cur disdain to touch?
And this from thee: nay, heaven, this is

too much!
Eud. In wounding thee I wound myself
and thee;

Look thou as thou dost feel, look thou to
me;

Upon my saddened eye, my trembling
hand,

Then if thou canst, thou may'st me reprim-
mand.

Theo. Love cannot blame.
Eud. Why then, love should forgive,
And crown defeat with resignation.

Live

Thou to this end, and living thus thou
wilt

Outlive thy present passing passion.
Theo. Such hopes built

On such unstable ground are like unto
Light feathers in the air that spin and

spew
The devil's dancer's jigs in merriment;

'Tis false, delusive hope; my joys are
rent.

Eud. Believe me sir, I am myself be-
reft

In so disposing of thy honorable love.
Had I the power I would, with advance

deft,
Speed thee thy joy as swift as any dove.

Luc. I believe thee, lady, and believ-
ing thee,

Will leave thee, lady, yet still loving
thee;

For I will always love thee, leave thee I.
Or be with thee, what it be, till I die.

Eud. I fain would have thee know
why thou wert not

Successful in thy suit, as 'tis my lot
To so advise thee now before thou goest

Perchance forever from my sight. Thou
know'st

That this may be; and being so I'd have
Thee think of me with gentle thoughts.

As I have said, I love thee for thy traits,
And brood the folly that ordained the

fates
Requiring not so worthy an affection.

But love is love and if it be true love
Comes from that higher source we know

naught of,
We have no small control o'er its descent;

It falls upon us shrewdly, swiftly bent.
In sudden, silent mystery it does come,

Whence no one knows but that perchance
from some

Sweet tided land. Oh, Love! Thou who
art wrought

From sequestration like a happy thought,
Bursting forth from thy oblivion's seat

To joyous revelation calm and sweet,
Oh, Love! thou art a great and mighty

king;
Come crown thy queen and to her com-
fort bring.

This is the love that, loving, I must feel
Before I can requite.

Theo. To thee I kneel
And do thee reverence; thou art a queen

Deserving of, uncrowned by, love serene;
That though uncrowned, still being

worthy of,
Thou wilt be crowned as thou dost merit

love.
Eud. I thank thee sir; now rise and
go thou hence;

Sweet thoughts to thee: let this be my defense.

Theo. Thou teachest me the lesson how to love,
As thou hast taught me how to stifle love
Met by thy unrequital. Fare you well;
I'll now depart to loveless parts of hell.

[Exeunt Theophilus and Salmon.]

Eud. How sad he was; thank heaven it is achieved,
Though my poor heart like his, is all bereaved.

Adessa!

Ades. Yes, my lady.

Eud. Where hast thou been, Adessa?
I had quite forgot poor thee, and that poor Salmon, too.

How fared thee with thy sponge?

And did he thy heart plunge
To weeping miseries?

Ades. I was the sponge; and he the wringer,
For he did wing my hand past my endurance,

Till now I am as dry as the driest sponge.
That man is the fag-end of a fool.

Eud. It seems that he hath fooled with thee,
Leaving thee the fag-end of his foolishness.

But didst thou note, Adessa, my misguided fewd
With good Theophilus?

Ades. I did, my lady, and I did pity thee and him.

Eud. Did pity him because he is so good,
And me because I cannot wield his goodness

Its reward. I would that I could love him

As I should, Adessa; for he is worthy
Woman's purest love.

Ades. And being worthy, meets with disappointment.

That conjurer we call love, and think 'tis sweet,
Doth conjure many a trusting, credulous heart

To worlds of bitterness.

Eud. Then mocks his grief;
But there, Adessa, this is sad for me
To dwell upon, since I, with this same sceptre

Of injustice, rule the miserable fate of one,

Ay! one whom I esteem as well as I esteem myself,

To evil destinies. There, come, I'd have a little air.

The thought of it expugns me here with guilt,

As though, though gone, his spirit still remain

To harass me. But hark! a foot falls.

Ades. 'Tis thy good friend Sebastian comes in haste,
And he doth carry with him marks of great disturbance,
Like as if some wild-eyed devil had him in pursuit,
And he did strive most eagerly to out-distance him.

Eud. Doth he look drunk?

Ades. If to look drunk, is to act wild, why yes,
He hath a drunken look. But here he comes.

Enter SEBASTIAN, excitedly.

Sebas. Pardon, dear lady Eudora, my hazardous

And undue intrusion into thy sacred solitudes,
I know he who is guilty of an impropriety,

So unbecoming as this deed, must needs explain

His curt unceremonious behavior to her offended,

Else why should he be pardoned?

Eud. Thou art welcome, Lord Sebastian, to my house, and to my privacy.

But how is this? Thou seem'st so wrought about?

What evil tide has so o'erwhelmed thee now,

That thy old wonted calm desertest thee?

Sebas. Why, I have had a hot and mighty race,

And breathless, all agore with copious drops

In fever-heat, close-press'd, urged swiftly on,

My sinews strained and pitched to their highest tension,

Guaging a natural stride to an over-reach

That well-nigh tore my two limbs wide apart,

As eagerness o'er-topped anxiousness in my mind,

Presenting their crazy conditions fore and hind

Attrite in hideousness, coursed through a fitful vein;

So in such hot-haste speed have I arrived,

Out-striving him whom I've at last out-strived.

Eud. Pray make thy speech more plain; thou art too much

For me: else I am much too dumb for thee.

With whom or what hast thou vied such endeavors?

Sebas. With one, dear lady, who from thee ne'er severs.

Eud. Who from me ne'er severs, why my lord,
Thou hast not run a race with me; how then?

Sebas. Not with thee, but thine.

Eud. Not me, but mine!

Sebas. Ay! thine, dear lady, thine; thine own

On wings of love.

Eud. Thou sinkest deeper in mysterious talk

As thou continuest. Canst thou not enlighten me, my lord?

Thy mystery breeds my interest; then let mine,

A child begot, by thine, a father got,
Know more of its strange parent.

Pray enlighten me.

Sebas. Thou art enlightened; I can see thou art,

Thou canst not screen from me what's in thy heart;

Thy face was never made to play deceit Upon a father's wits. Pray be discreet.

Eud. I am discreet, but I am no deceit.

Sebas. Then thou art not a woman;

For where's that woman framed of proper stuff,

Boasts not of gross deceit?

Eud. Thou art not only in part wrong, But two parts wrong.

How can a face that cannot play deceit, O'er-top a body substantiated from deceit?

Sebas. Like uveous fruit depending from its vine,

Whose pungent parts lie hidden 'neath its rind;

For edge thy teeth on its soft round outside,

And thou dost find deceit on its inside.

Eud. Ay! there it is, but not upon its face.

Sebas. So woman's lies though it show not on face.

Eud. Put woman through what that poor grape goes through,

And lo! perforce her all of good and bad,
Sweet traits, stanch truths, and dark and evil thoughts,

Long pent-up virtues, low discouraged lusts,

Will spring from her freed from their dark confines,

At the first cracked embrasure rendered sure,

Apertured by the test of hard ordeal,

To sudden light as sudden to discovery.
I would that thou conceive of some such test

To bring out my deceit and all the rest,
And though thou finds't in all an hundred faults,

For every grain of rare deceit thou finds't,

I'll give to thee an hundred pounds in gold,

Then give thee back that purchased for thy use,

That being all thou hast I'll envy thee,
That being all I had thou'lt envy me.

Sebas. Thou makest what is thick as rare as air,

The web of cold deceit is not so rare

As fleecy webs that float upon the air.

Eud. I'll test that with a pound of rarest air,

And with a pound of cold deceit as rare.

The air will not sustain the rare deceit,

The cold deceit will rot the rarest air.

Sebas. But as thou breathest air, so may'st

Thou breathe deceit, the one being ponderous

As the other.

Eud. The heart's diastole 'gainst her return

Expels the crimson stream through its canals;

So breathing out what I inhaled before,

I rid myself again of cold deceit.

But come, this jargon tells me not of thee,
Why thou art here, nor of thy strange condition.

My name is silence; let thine be eloquence,

That thou may'st favor me, mine ears, my heart,

With some kind explanation.

Sebas. 'Tis meet I should, for my pursuer

Will now soon be here, that, if he do,
And nip me in this cage, caged with his search,

I'll lose my cause, and thou wilt lose some peace,

Since gaining greatest joy thy joys would cease.

Ades. List! some one comes; I ween 'tis thy pursuer.

Sebas. It is: I know that step.

It is the step of fleet Alphonso who doth tread the earth like silent stealthy wind;

His legs mere aglets dangling here and there,

Do touch the barren ground with such a zest,

That lo! fresh verdue springeth quickly
up
But from the moisture left from one bare
step.

This same Alphonso, my dear lady her-
aldeth

His master, my unworthy son, though
loved son,

Roderick; who comes to thee to learn
how thou

Regardest his affections, which though
true and loyal

As any lady could desire, I desire thee
not

To grant him their requital, but pending
thy respite,

Play on his feelings, on his heart, his
mind

To steadfast his religion to our kind.

Oh, my poor suffering heart is hid so
deep

In my lost son, that, pardon me, I weep
For his degeneracy.

Ades. Be quick, he comes!

Eud. Let him not in, Adessa, yet
awhile;

Inveigle him by all artful means outside
To give us needed time to think, to act;

Pray haste thee, use thy shrewdest, ut-
most tact. [*Exit Adessa.*]

Now, my good lord, what is thy high
desire?

Speak sir, let thy good cause me so in-
spire

That, being thine, thine will be mine, to
wield

A common issue; our own joys to shield.

Sebas. Ay! Good Endora, that were
well to heart;

A speech like that to mine ears doth im-
part

Where thy ambition lies. Oh! why should
one

Sway such infinite power, where two has
won

No laurels from the one!

Eud. Speak Lord, and then
Perchance some power we may sway o'er
him

Who now can strong defy us. I have much
Respect upon my powers to subdue

This now unruly son of thine to ways
That may fill mine own self with just
amaze.

Sebas. I would the fates so willed it

Eud. Doubt it not,
I go into this cause with one fixed aim,

My purpose to subdue thy son and tame
His unnatural freak. Mark thou it well,

my lord,
Before I've done with this, thou't have a
son

Thou't be quite proud of.

Sebas. I rest great faith in thee;
And now for the better end of thy ad-
venture,

Pay special heed that thou dost so adjust
Thy manners, speech, that he'll not thee

mistrust,
And so mistrusting, stand aloof from
thee,

Refusing to ingratiate with thee;
Thy pleadings, thy sweet overtures to
waste

Upon hard barren ground like so much
paste

Upon a palette.

Eud. I'll mark it well, my lord,
That, hath he but one mote of incredulity,

I'll shatter it with points of feigned in-
nocence,

That, falling on his head with well-aimed
force,

Will prick him to a credulous good
humor.

Sebas. I trust thy shrewdness, lady.

Eud. But I would have a little time
In which to better think, to so devise

The method of my plottings and my
deeds,

That they be precedent to a happier end,
To crown us both with that we now de-
fend.

Sebas. Would'st thou escape?

Eud. Ay! ay! my lord, I would be
calmer than I'm now,

To meet this hot-head son of thine, and
vow

To him what I must needs avow. I'll out
And stroll in listless manner round about,

Bathed in the dews of a calm and peace-
ful night,

Encircled by the beams of soft moonlight.
Adieu, my lord, let it be known to thy son,

That Endora cannot audience him to-
night,

This is the better way to win our fight,
And in the end rejoice in a battle won.

[*Exit.*]

Sebas. Oh! never did this earth hold
one so fair,

As this same sweet Endora who would
dare

Launch her frail barque on the bosom of
a deep

Where ready dangers may upon her leap.
What go-den virtues lie hid in her heart,

None but her God can to the world im-
part;

None but good deeds in charity bestowed
Can tell of virtues lurked in heart's abode.

There comes a dream to pilgrims on this
earth

Whose name is virtue—comes at hour of birth;
 Clings to them through their gladsome childhood days,
 Until the pilgrim don maturer ways.
 'Tis then the hour when all to changings forced,
 Are snatched from youth, and from youth's sweets divorced,
 Some left to plod a weary road alone,
 Some scourged, and beat and fed upon a bone;
 Some revel in high pomp, affluent wealth,
 Some bowed beneath the bondage of ill-health;
 Some turn to vassals, some to monarch kings,
 Some rise to rule, some fall to underlings.
 Some surfeit high in superfluity,
 Some mope content in mediocrity;
 Some grovel low in dull adversity,
 Some die unknown in sad obscurity.
 There is but one on earth, in wayside borough
 That stands unchanged—this is the chaste Eudora.

Enter ADESSA and ALPHONSO.

Adessa. Back! back! thou knave!

Sebas. Let him come in, Adessa, thy mistress,

Who has flown, so willed it.

Where is my son, thy master, Alphonso?

Alph. By now upon his way to Lady Eudora's, my lord.

Sebas. Did he so guage thine arrival here to serve as a precedent to his own, whereby the hour of his coming might be arrived at?

Alph. I think not, my lord. My lord, your son seemed somewhat out of his prettier moods when he dismissed me on my present mission; and with such a tone of command, such as that I have never been the object of its address before in my experience as serving-man to your son, my master, that in sheer dread I actually flew to this, my destination, only to be blocked on the last stride to its accomplishment, by some one whom at first I mistook for a fairy, but who eventually developed into this charming creature, whom it is now my delectation to gaze upon.

Sebas. Thou fool, it were better to court danger than to court a woman; for courting woman thou dost court a double danger, either in a surfeit of good, or a superabundance of bad.

Alph. Yet this is now my medium, the means of my delight; I see no such extreme of good or bad in this.

Sebas. The season of extremity is not yet due;

But it will come as winter follows summer.

But there; go meet thy master, give to him this news:

Say shrewdly that Eudora doth his presence now refuse;

Keep secret thou my presence here, look well to this, thou knave;

On pain of my hot fury which will not from pain thee save.

Adph. 'Tis as you say, my lord.

Farewell, sweet one, I'll see thee soon again. [*Exit.*]

Sebas. Adessa, thy fair mistress, feeling indisposed,

Waived meeting my son Roderick till some other time,

That, so respiting, our laid plans are not disclosed.

Ades. Where is my mistress?

Sebas. Out in the night sublime
 To let thought cope with thought to better join

Our purpose to its deed.

Ades. Why then I'll join
 My mistress and perchance prove shining light,

'Gainst pale moonbeams that flood the tranquil night. [*Exit.*]

Sebas. 'Tis well she goes to give her mistress cheer;

'Tis well I go, lest my son catch me here. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III. *Room in Humphrey's House.*

Enter HUMPHREY.

Hum. Now plague, thou plager's tool,
 I would thee hence;

Plague thou some other fool in my defense;

Wield to him grimly grim illusive taunts,
 Enshroud his mind with false delusive haunts.

World! world! thou art a mixed and mongrel lot

Of farce-brained fools, who, brainless, praise and plot;

Praise loud each deed, plot 'gainst each other's souls,

Condoling griefs, each grieving heart condoles

Its own, for what? to grieve again the heart

Just balm'd from grief; so does this world depart

From holiness, and so do men play fools,
 Greet fools, consort with them, use them for tools

To thus achieve some mercenary end,

Promote intent where good and bad do
blend.

Would I could die to live somewhere
again,

Or would that I could live here now, as
when

I lived a child, when innocence combined
itself with happiness. Oh, joys! confined

Within thy limitless retreat, dissolve
My anile dotage; tune my heart's resolve

To meritorious intent boundless bent,
From meretricious deeds let it be rent!

'Tis some hallucination of the brain
That pricks my conscience with its bitter
bane,

Opposing deed with intent, wielding this
In incongruent metamorphosis.

But why am I am affright and wildly
dream

Strange fantasies? Absurd to me they'd
seem

Another time, unwrought by circum-
stance,

As that now wrought by my extrava-
gance.

Look hand, thou trembling stranger to
mine eyes!

Wherefore comest thou to me in this
disguise?

Thou art as weak and meagre as faint
breath

If thou dost palsy at the thought of death.
Away night dreams! Away diurnal

thoughts!

Chase thou each other where thy chas-
ing fraughts

More dark destruction than is freighted
here;

Chase where thy victim lies upon a bier.
Cold death is thy cold issue, coldly greet

Thine offspring; save thy name disgrace,
defeat!

Who comes?

Enter ORESTES.

Avaunt! Orestes, thou would'st come
Upon me like the doom of death; I'm

dumb

With fear, my very fear enforcing speech
From dumbness to a piping, piercing

screech.

I am unnerved to-night, pray give me
cheer,

What hast thou learned, Orestes, why
now here?

Ores. I've learned that's bad: bad news
propelled me here.

Hum. What! learned that's bad: bad
news propelled thee here!

Oh! say it not; my heart succumbed
with fear,

Now gorged with it, expanding, it will
break;

Already it begins to sink and quake
Like twitchings of a sleepless eyelid

drawn,

That, 'gainst command, blinks ruefully
ere dawn.

What is thy news, Orestes, is't so bad
Thou can'st not tell it?

Ores. Would I could.
Hum. Oh! mad

Espousal to a mad decree of fates,
To grasp for that our peace emaciates

To dwindlings of itself, ourselves en-
throne

With bitterness, with death, with hell's
bemoan.

Why do I curse since cursing naught
avails?

Why do I rave since raving never fails
Of making that already bad still worse?

Yet there is some sweet comfort in a
curse

That soothes my brewing spirits to some
peace,

Though I lose all in losing one dear niece.
Ores. Dear to thy heart?

Hum. Ay! ay! dear to my heart,
My soul, my life, my joys from me depart

When I do think how dear Eudora is
To my forsaken self.

Ores. More to thy purse, I wis.
Hum. Well, love were strongest built

upon a purse.

Ores. But take the base away love will
disperse.

Hum. True, true; why should it not?
What mountain peak,

Majestic, soaring high, could rise to seek
The ether in the sky, had it no base

To stay it to its ever-constant grace?
Ores. In the light of thine own reasons,

then, thou love'st
No more Eudora.

Hum. I could sheath a dagger in her
heart

And thank the deed, since it beats not to
my

Advantage, as that depended on by her
acceptance

Of my nephew.

Ores. Is thine own house in danger of
a fall?

In losing this, dost thou lose house, lose
all?

Hum. Ay! all! all! all! my house, my
lands, my suffrages

Will to my bondsmen go to pleasure their
dire ravages.

Hark, friend Orestes, to thine ears let me
Vouchsafe to tell the cause of my ennui:

Two years ago I ventured forth in trade
To foreign countries, export merchan-
dise,

That in return vast fortune may be made;
Large moneys I expended in the enter-
prise,
Till soon exhausted my poor purse be-
came,
And I was forced to borrow, though my
fame

Was such that I no trouble had to obtain
Sufficient to encounter pressing debt,
And place me thus beyond immediate
loss.

Well, in this state of venture and of risk,
All progressed well till on an evil day
Grave tidings reached me from my mer-
chandise,
That, from some cause unknown or else
withheld,

My goods were to great jeopardy ex-
posed,
That I might ne'er them apprehend, nor
worse,

Receive my money for their late export.
I did not place much credence in this tale,
For though the tidings gave me much to
fear,

Left much to hope for. Ay, indeed, the
word

Came in such doubtful tone that I was
urged

By friends, and by my bondsmen, too, to
cease

All lamentations.

But now another evil day doth come;
My bondsmen, who in past, so generously
Sustained me from suspense and from
despond

At my reported losses, having now grown
anxious,

Do me encompass with loud importuni-
ties,

Entreating my quick settlement with
them.

This could I do, and do ten times the more,
Did I but have within my empty purse
One-tenth the value of my merchandise,
Which I'm afraid ere this is squandered
all.

Ores. What of Eudora?

Hum. Nay, pray ask me not;
This was my last dim substance of a hope,
That, seeming first as strong and taut as
rope,
Has now, alas! waxed to a single thread.
Alas! alas! are hopes and prospects
dead.

Ores. Perchance 'tis not so bad as thou
dost fear:

The mother from her eanlings steals
away,
That they become more anxious she re-
turn.

So might it be Eudora hath refused
Thy nephew that he might return again
To later get that he desires from her.
I know these lovers are a wily lot,
Withholding this to give that they've not

got,
Bestowing that they've got yet giving
not,
To finally court love upon a cot.

Hum. If thou didst know this lady
thou would'st not

Associate her name with coquetry.
She is as true as chaste, withal reserv'd,
As true as her reserves of filter'd gold,
As chaste as the pure gold that crouches
there,

As rich as I, myself, am nude and bare.

Ores. But thou may'st yet amass thy-
self with wealth,
If thou but utilize thy native stealth,
And at the proper time make proper
strides

Into occasion, when she most confides
In thee, thy prudence, judgment, and
thy wits,

To gain advantage to thyself, that fits
Thy sad necessities.

Hum. Did I not this?

Did I not with the keenest, shrewdest wit
Foresee my nephew's hot uxorious love,
And urge him on to its indulgences,
With mine own eye upon mine own ad-
vantages?

To what result? Why, Theophilus is re-
fused,

And you and I, for money, stand abused.
Had he been so successful in his suit,

My coffers would have filled; I to refute
These charges made against me, clearing
me

From debt to my hard bondsmen, stifling
me.

My nephew I can twist about with ease,
And do with him whate'er it might me
please;

Bah! why dwell I on futile, barren
ground?

I might twist now till to a ball I wound
This barren nephew of my flesh and
blood.

'Twere best I kill him for his want of
blood,

And end this farce in a tragedy of blood.

Ores. Yet still, withal, there might be
some rebate,

Thy mind's recourse should have its full
debate.

Full many a fight begins with facing
death,

And ends in vict'ry wielding greater
death.

Hum. True, true: thou'rt right, Orestes,
thou art right,
And though I now face death I'll to the
fight
Once more equipped with reenforced
arms;
Beware, Orestes, that my fight alarms
Thee not; for like a beast pressed to its
bay,
If so it be, I'll wield death and dismay.
Hark! by my soul, here comes the weak-
ling now;
He who could not a stronger love avow
But that to lose it all. Soft, good Orestes,
Let not his mood distraught us, nor divest
us
Of our own sweet selves; list, sir: our
moods
Must cure his sad complexion of its droop,
To sponge him to a still more willing
dupe:
So doff that look and don a prettier smile,
To greet his entrance in a pleasant style.

Enter THEOPHILUS.

Ores. Mark, Humphrey, his dejection
in his gait.

Hum. Fain would I mark erection on
his pate.

Ores. And let the mark stand for thy
pent-up hate

To gratify revenge, thee satiate.

Hum. Soft! he speaks.

Theo. Eudora!

Hum. What said he, sir?

Ores. Eudora.

Hum. Bah! Eudora; sweet Eudora!
Lost saint of my heart's passions, lost
Eudora!

Oh! thou dear angel; angels plot my
death

When thou dost lose thyself to me.
Orestes,

How do I mince this phantom thing
Of unrequited love?

Do I steep it with that remorseful air
Instinctive of that pain a heart must bear
At such a loss? How this does sicken me!
Were love sought for with half the ardu-
ousness

That lost love is bewail'd,
Ne'er would there be an issue of lost love,
Ne'er bitterness entail'd.

Ores. He speaks again.

Theo. Dear heart, dear heart,
lost soul;

Dead hope, dead hope, once dear, now
dead!

Hum. Thou mole,
Go burrow in thy hill and there lament
In darkness dread thy fate to thy content.
But I must put a bridle on my prate,

To stop this tirade of my heart's deep
hate;

Stand by, Orestes, I'll now speak to him
An uncle's deep condolence.

Theo. Light is dim,
Love dead, heaven has grown cold, earth
is a hell,
Hell is my doom, doom reigns in me pell-
mell.

Hum. Come, come, Theophilus, why
art thou in this garb entranc'd?

Did'st thou not note when I to thee ad-
vanced

To greet thy pitiable approach?

Theo. Methinks I dream'd;

Why uncle, is this you? And thou,
Orestes?

My eyes! my brain is in a whirl; my
heart

In pensile anguish, lifeless of a throb,
Cold, cheerless, ice, beats but to wail
and sob

My heart's love's requiem. Dear uncle,
stay my hand;

Nay, not my heart, my heart now to ex-
pand,

Must needs be new—replenish'd with
new life,

Ere it be mine again—to 'suage this strife.

Hum. Stay, nephew, be not so.

Ores. What is thy cheer?

Hum. Here are thy friends, Theophilus,
even here and here.

Thy uncle's love for thee is all so great
He'd sacrifice his life to reinstate

Thy wonted peace of mind within thy
mind,

And dying, think he'd done a deed not
kind.

Theo. I thank thee, uncle, but when
thou canst kill

This grief, I'll be a suitor to thy skill.

Hum. Thou know'st, Theophilus, that
my credit now

Lies at the door of questionable attack,
That all my wealth must to the bondsmen

go,
When so the whim possess them to en-
force.

But what to thee my poor griefs are to
me,

Thy griefs will be my griefs as thine to
thee;

So shifting thine to mine and mine to me,
I'll make thy griefs my griefs to leave
thee free.

What is the loss of gold to loss of love?
One comes from below, the other from
above,

One comes from filthy dregs of quagmires
deed,

The other falls from heaven like gentle sleep.

Oh, nephew! let me with a gentle hand,
Dispel thy gloom, upon new hopes thee stand.

Theo. Thou talk'st of something futile of success;

Hope in a dream may tangibly impress,
But hope in truth intangibly depress.

Hum. Dost thou say this? Well, let me have a say;

And whilst I say let thine ears have a heed,

Thy heed a head; thy head a perspicuity.
Say first thou art in love, thy love profound,

Say she thou lovest thy hopes would all confound,

Say thy love's name commences with an E,

Say this same E is known full-well by me;
Say my best friendship I through her enjoy,

And say through this I may forthwith employ

The means by which thy pleasures may be crown'd

By sweet Eudora's lips so ripe and round.
Hark! nephew, say'st thou but the need-ed word,

I'll to Eudora fleet as a carrier's bird;
Learn from her lips—those lips so ripe and round—

The cherry of her droppings; dropping, bound

Back to her lips, be it not sweet to me,
And being bitter, be not sweet to thee,
For her maturer thought and later speech,
That time abetting love might love her teach.

Theo. Canst thou do this?

Hum. Ay! can and will, and more.
This instant will I start, even now before

Thou canst find breath to speed me on my way;

Let me beseech thee, nephew, here to stay,

Whilst good Orestes and myself betake
Our two selves to this errand for thy sake.
Meanwhile thou canst regale thyself in feast

From mine own table till thy needs have ceased.

I will'd thee here to dine with me at eight,
But now I will that you for us not wait,
Since it will throw thy dining much too late.

Look for us back by ten.

Adieu my nephew until then.

[*Exeunt Humphrey and Orestes.*]

Theo. Oh, fate! thou'rt kind; thy kindness is to me

What hope was; now I can new hope foresee;

And viewing this the vista of my peace,
I'll take him at his word, till my needs cease. [Exit.]

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A Lonely Place in Wood Surrounding Eudora's Seat.*

Enter EUDORA.

Eud. Oh lovely night! Oh, soft, still night serene!

Oh calm moonlight, shed thy rich beams on me;

Skim o'er dull earth thy shadows and thy sheen,

Like phantoms strangely wrought upon the sea.

For I have need of thee, oh gentle night,
And thee, thou peerless, beauteous moon so bright;

Need, too, have I of thee, thou shadows drear,

Have need for all, to banish fear, brood fear! [Strain of music without.]

But hark! what strange weird music steals from thence,

As though from heaven it fall upon my sense.

Oh welcome thou, thou cool and soothing draught,

I, who pass pleasures by, untouch'd, unquaff'd,

Will, turning, drink of thee, thy bitterest lees,

To still my heart, my joyless soul to please. [Kneels and listens.]

SONG FROM WITHOUT.

We roll, we roll our balls along,

We sing, we sing a jocund song,

We dance, we dance a nimble jig,

We don, we don a grotesque rig,

We sail, we sail into the air,

We join, we join our brothers there,

We clink, we clink our glasses high,

We drink, we drink our glasses dry,

We float, we float upon the breeze,

We sneeze, we sneeze, we sneeze, we sneeze,

We fall, we fall to our warm den,

We roll, we roll our balls again.

Eud. As cold and cheerless dawn is forc'd away

By advent of a bright and cheerful day,
So this quaint music soothes me to a rest,

Lulls me to sleep, instills peace in my breast. [Falls asleep.]

SONG WITHOUT.

But when we're sad, we sigh, we sigh,
And this is when to die, to die,
We carry one away, away,
Oh, this is one sad day, sad day;
For love we each so well, so well,
That we to each can't tell, can't tell,
How well we do love each, love each,
Though we do scream, and screech, and
screech.

Come, come to us, Gershom, Gershom,
Bring to us our meerschaum, meer-
schaum,
So we can draw sweet peace, sweet
peace,
Our sorrows now to cease, to cease!

Enter ADESSA and ALPHONSO during song.

Ades. What bitter plaintive music.

Alph. It is Gershom

And his imps: they do revel high to-
night.

But come, sweet life, what say you to my
suit.

Ades. 'Twould suit me best to find my
mistress now.

Alph. And finding her 'twould be some
other whim.

Ades. And finding her, I durst not find
a him.

Alph. Then let 'him', finding her, find
thee out first.

Ades. Nay, nay, sir, find that last that's
worst.

Alph. In finding thee I find that which
is best.

Ades. Me better than my mistress—I'm
mistress'd.

Alph. And I thy future lord, am now a
lord.

Ades. A pretty lord: thou canst not
wield a sword.

Alph. I'll teach thee that I can some
near-dawn'd day,

And lunge me at thyself to thy dismay.

Ades. Stop sir, beseech! thou put'st me
in a fright.

Alph. Why fright? I said not near-
twilighted night.

Ades. Thou coarse-spun knave! I'll
now no more of thee.

Alph. For why? Why but because I
tickled thee.

Ades. Be careful that thou tickle'st not
thyself.

Alph. In tickling thee, I tickle, too,
myself.

Ades. To tickle much is said to court
sure death.

Alph. I'll run that risk as long as I
have breath.

Ades. Thou zany-headed knave, thou
art not gallant.

Alph. No neither; neither am I gall
nor ant.

Ades. Too bitter for gall; too idle for
an ant.

Alph. But serve me fair; too idle for
an ant,

Too sweet for gall; so therefore right for
thee.

Ades. Thou art not right till thou dost
prove to be.

Alph. How prove?

Ades. Go seek my mistress.

Alph. Mistress mine,
Art thou not mistress in thy right?

Ades. Not thine
Till thou dost find out mine.

Alph. Where shall I look?

Ades. Look high, look low, in meadow,
laughing brook,

Look o'er far mountain, dale, look every-
where;

Look everywhere, where there's a mote
of air.

Alph. Then I must needs have sub-
stance of ubiquity.

Ades. Which ne'er can be since thou
hast such antiquity.

Alph. My nimble limbs should tell you
I'm not old,

That I am not a father to myself,
But rather they should long ere this have
told

I fain would be a husband to thyself.

Ades. How well thou pleadest and for
what a cause!

Methinks Alphonso, thou wert best to
pauze

Before you step on strange ground such
as this

Of venture for anticipated bliss.

Look wary, sir, and well; the ground
might break

To duck thee and thy love in Cupid's lake.

Alph. I'll take the risk, fair Goddess;
wilt thou be

The ground upon whose strangeness I am
he

Who will adventure forth? Where is the
lake?

Let me plunge in, some precious jewels
take.

Ades. Soft, soft, young man! thine
ardor heats thy brain,

Creating dreams thou canst not yet attain.
Get thee now gone, my mistress search

in speed;
'Tis then I'll think to merit thee thy
meed.

Enter RODERICK.

Alph. Heavens, my master!

Ades. Thy master, Lord Sebastian, and thyself
Seem to have been forgot.

Alph. In thee, thou elf;
Thou art the cause; thou didst entice me thence.

But quick, my master comes.

Ades. There's no defense;
He must not see us here.

Alph. We'll run and look
For thy sweet mistress by the laughing
brook. [*Exeunt Adessa and Alphonso.*]

Rod. Did I hear voices speak? Or was
that heard

But faint far echo off these distant hills
Of my heart's dreadful beatings? Cap-
tive thou!

Cag'd and secur'd 'gainst plunderous
hand of man,

Corsag'd in prison of steel, mew'd in
hermetical bands,

Thou'rt strange in mystery shrouded!
Beat thou on,

Thou mystic dispenser of dear life and
love,

Thou monarch of tyrants, terrible wield-
er of death,

Thou thing of quivering flesh; cease thou
but once,

One single throb omit; lo! life is gone,
And love is gone, yea all but death is
gone.

Oh death! how like unto thee is this
horrid place,

How fitting, how appropriate is thy
thought,

How like a chill enforc'd comes thy white
face

Before mine eye, before mine own cold
face!

There is a something in this loathsome
air

That seems to savor death; would I
could tear

Away from earth this fulsome tyranny;
Dethrone the mighty monarch; from
him wrest

That power with which in one spare
moment, jest

Is quick cut short, the jester pressed to
bend

'Neath the throes of an untimely, sudden
end.

But why wince I and o'er these matters
mince?

I'll mince them now no more, nor neither
wince

At their illusion's dreams! Begone, thou
thief,

Thou ravisher of peace; I would as lief
Be dead myself as have thee reign within,

To rule destruction and abet lewd sin.

So, cease this quibbling, heart, lest quib-
bling still,

Thou wilt, forgetting, cease to beat at
will,

Whilst I, perforce, cease my short pil-
grimage,

To dwell forever in death's vassalage.

Still I do wonder, wondering, stop to
muse:

What would the world regret, what would
it lose

Were such a thing as I myself to die?

Would any my death reverence with a
sigh?

I have a father, stern, commanding, true,
Him I revere as is a father's due,

And he loves me, for I'm the only one;
Would he, I wonder, grieve for a dead
son?

I have a mother, sweet and sweetly fair,
Who dotes on me—the son whom she did
bear

Into this hapless world of woe and joy;
Would she, I wonder, grieve for her dead
boy?

Of all my friends, dear Lubin I love best,
Ay, better far than I love all the rest;

My heart misgives me when from him I
rend;

Would he, I wonder, grieve for his dead
friend?

Ah, what of thee Eudora, thee I love
Far better than them all, thou gentle
dove;

To think of aught is but to think of thee,
Were I to die, would'st thou grieve much
for me?

And what of thee, Sir Roderick, infidel!
Thee who believeth not in heaven and
hell;

Accepts no God, revileth His fair name;
Would'st thou grieve much to die in such
a shame?

Ah, who can tell? Can any on this earth
From ancient sage to merest babe at
birth?

No, none, not one: there's none on earth
can tell;

Or if there be, then there's a heaven and
hell.

But there! I'll seek Eudora, learn her
mood,

Break my long fast to feast on daintier
food.

[*He turns and espies Eudora still asleep.*]
What! by my life; were this loved sight
brought real,

'Twould not more clearly to mine eyes
reveal

That I do languish for! Stay thou, O
dream;

Let not thyself dispel thy lovely self,

As thou at dead of night art wont to do,
When thou hast wafted to some sylvan
bower,

Or perch'd unsafe the victim of thy power
Upon some inaccessible mountain peak,
To thus forsake him, leave him, so to
speak,

At the bare mercy of the treacherous
winds,

Till he, awearied, bruis'd, and broken,
finds

Strange, sweet relief at being torn away
To fall, fall, fall to earth, and falling, lay
Affrighted, blear-eyed, or be dashed to
death,

To wake at last for very want of breath;
Stay thou O dream, to fascinate my sight,
I feast upon thy boards, and feasting,
might

Be warded to my heaven, for reigning
there,

Repose upon Eudora's bosom fair.

Now dreamer's dream, methought Eudora
moved,

Though not mine eyes but rather instinct
proved

To my distracted self that she did stir;
What! this a dream that I must this infer?
I'll to her now and softly, gently touch
Her soft smooth cheek with my soft hand;
why such

A softness to a softness softly brought
Must needs bring softness to a heart hard-
wrought,

And soften any anger lurking there;
Thus I'd approach a tigress in her lair,
To turn ferocious mood to intent meek,
And seeking peace, much more would I
then seek.

[Eudora moves and partially raises her head.
Why stay, foul hand, perchance thy soft-
est part

Is far too coarse to soothe by touch a
heart

As tender as Eudora's is.

Eud. Who speaks? Who speaks?

Rod. Who speaks; 'tis thine own pre-
cious self that speaks,
Nor ne'er did two such words from two
such lips

Strike two such listening ears with two
such tips

To two such cordial tinglings of delight,
As thy two words have done.

Eud. Why, I'm affright,
Why this is Gershom's place, 'tis said by
some

Strange things have happened here!
Why did I come

To such a place, alone, at such a time?

Rod. [Aside] Now tongue, be wise; let
thy speech be sublime,

For thou dost court an angel here on
earth,

And in this venture all my joys I girth.

[Eudora slowly rises.

Lo! rising out of beauty's beauteous cot,
Thy beauty rises out of beauteous spot,
Thyself a downy bed reposing thee,
Thyself a beauteous queen exposing thee.

Eud. Do I still sleep and do my senses
quib?

No, by my troth, as man doth want a rib
There stands the shortage now before
mine eyes;

Him whom to cherish is but to dispise.

Rod. As man's deficit is for woman's
make,

Let my deficit so stand for thy sake.

Thy God, 'tis said, created man of dust,
Then placed brave Adam's rib in Eve's
fair bust.

Eud. But Adam was a christian, not
like you,

Disclaiming God and Christ, worse than
a Jew.

Rod. And Eve, an evil temptress,
lewd, unchaste,

The very name of Eve doth evil taste.

Eud. But we are not all Eves; true
woman's shrine

Encloses virtues rare withal divine;

The very name of woman beggars lust,
Protects her from its taint, its tabid rust.

'Tis not in woman's sphere—thank God
for this—

To tarnish woman's name, her virtue hiss;
But rather in her sphere who would de-
fame

Pure womanhood by falling 'neath the
name.

There is this line—thank God again for
this—

Dividing lust from virtue; Oh! to kiss

The feet of Him who founded a decree

Debarring lust from sailing virtue's sea.

No woman need have fear who would
adorn

The name of woman, shielding it from
scorn.

A name well guarded from pollution's
spoils

Is well worth guarding, worth a life of
toils;

For lo! behold true woman as she stands,
Untarnish'd and untouch'd by ruthless
hands;

Her virtue unimpeach'd like mountain
snow

Beyond man's reach from the valley far
below.

Rod. [Aside] How must I woo this fair
and dainty thing,

So like the innocent bird upon its wing?

How can I win a heart so good and pure,
That cannot stoop to sin nor sin endure?
My soul misgives to deign unworthy
speech,
My tongue seems cleav'd, refusing to be-
seech
Of her a hand, a heart, a love, a life
That soars so high above mine own poor
life.
Still that withheld from hazard's wild
degree,
Like dross, lies idle, bringing naught to
me;
'Tis unwise husbandry to hoard great
wealth,
Which by fair usance and with proper
stealth
Might be redoubled, bringing rich return
In welcom'd interest, earning all to earn.
'Tis thus I'll hazard my affection's gold
Upon Eudora's answer as 'tis told.

Eud. My lord, is this a fitting time and
place
For thee thy presence and thy moods to
grace?
What passing wanton humor drew thee
here

Where naught dwells save a grave and
rising fear?

Rod. Canst thou stand here on this
same very spot

Ingenuously pretending to know not
Why I have wended my footsteps this
way

When thou hast wended thine this self-
same way?

Ingenuous ay, dost thou pretend to be,
If thou dost think to slyly hoodwink me.
What would'st thou do did I retaliate
And with ingenuous quirk return thy
bait?

Might I not say in vain apostasy,
That I stole forth in silent ecstasy,
To vent a humor, passing though it be,
Befitting silent night, the wold, the lea?
Could I not with the same ingenuous air,
Me even here you standing even there,
From here to there soft whisper to you so
That I am here because I'm here: nor go
Shall I until it suit my will; nor stay
Unless it suit me best to go away?
This humor of a man is much disguis'd,
It creepeth in his heart all unappris'd,
And lurking there pulls him first here
then there,
Gives him no peace. Poor man! he does
not dare

Give in return one reprehensive rake,
Else in repay more peace itself betake.

Eud. Then rakes rest render, peace a
pricker's pierce,
The one to balm, the other to make fierce.

Rod. Why so stand I, pricked, pierced,
and probed with doubt,
Balm for whose pains do I exist without.

Eud. Then truly spoke, bad humor
drew you here.

That peace might prick, withholding
peaceful cheer.

Rod. Let discipline which cruel peace
controls,

Teach me by torture how thy heart con-
doles

The pangs of such a peace. Then let my
pride

Vault high to Jupiter's place, there dwell;
confide

My secret soul in beauteous Venus' ear,
And whisper her a love that she may
hear

In unperturbed stillness, ruminate
Upon that heard, my life to radiate.

Eud. Thy moods do make thee rave.

Rod. No, no, not they!
Say this one does. This is a mood to stay,
To make men rave, to make men's bos-
oms shake

Like rumblings of the earth, the earth's
fierce quake.

Eud. Doth not ambition's aim point
high for one

Who is as Godless as thyself?

Rod. Oh, sun!

Oh, venus bright, exalted star on high,
Thou art my fix'd ambition even nigh,
The constellation in my sky of hope;

What would I give could I with thee elope,
With thee forever dwell! Yea, I would
fain

Give other hopes, loves, joys for thee to
gain!

Am I unworthy one so chaste as thee?
Look! I before thy grace on bended knee

Invoke thy pardon—mercy's grandest
sphere

From whence is gently dealt to mortals
here

Boon'd ransoms, granting life to fetter'd
joys—

Oh! grant in mercy life to my mew'd
joys.

I, thy pedestal, thee my apex 'bove,
Light my base life with the candle of thy
love.

Eud. Thee I did oft behold a prattling
babe

With these same eyes, myself, like thee,
a babe,

In years, from now, some score or more
agone;

Dost thou remember once upon the lawn,
When thou in rompish humor for a freak
Did'st peevish, plan thy babish hands to
seek

To captivate the aphrodite bright
As she did wing herself away in fright,
Eluding thy babe's grasp to thy chagrin,
And soaring high, turn, mocking thy
chagrin?

As young a babe as I myself was then,
I have recall'd this freak oft and again;
I do recall it now to my regret,
Because thy moods did then such romps
beget.

Rod. Fair lady, I bethink me thou dost
wrong

In tuning argument to a nursery song,
To bring to bear on man's maturer age
The memories of a child's wild freaks;
thus guage

By them what in the man doth dwell;
Pray pleasure me, my lady, how canst
tell?

Eud. Why 'tis an easy task, a simple
thing;

God guag'd our thoughts, our minds to
subtly bring,

By means of pron'd instinctive pow'r so
will'd,

In swift transmission, heart to heart in-
still'd,

From mind to mind in tutor's mission
bent,

To give, to take, receive as it is sent.

That instinct thou dost note in bird and
beast

Is this same instinct dwells in man, in-
creas'd

By God's decree sprung wisely from a
love,

Surpassing that bestow'd on beast or
dove.

By means of this innate instinctive power,
Thoughts can read thoughts hid deep
within the bower

Of man's most sacred reveries.

Rod. What then!

I know the greatest step in life is when
Bold boyhood seeks to stride a manly
gait,

But mincing, stumbles o'er a step so great
That few accomplish taking it. But
come;

Thou would'st not say that I am still so
dumb

That I am still a mincing, brainless youth:
Methinks I merit more than this, for-
sooth!

Eud. What is thy meed—what thou
dost best deserve,

That thou will get, get from God's own
reserve.

Thy youth thy life's own truthful prece-
dent,

Thy life thine after-life's true precedent;
The way we live in youth we live in age,

'Tis thus in age to heaven our hopes we
guage.

So we do view it in all nature's works,
In field, in sky, in air it surely lurks;
Night's rural fusion, verdure's chrystal
bath

Bathes verdure's double in her aftermath.
But there, I must betake me to my house
Lest by my absence I will it arouse.

Rod. Stay yet awhile; though yon
bright moon doth beam,

The very thoughts of thy departure seem
To throw a darkness over me. Stay near!

Eud. Stay near! for what? Did I in-
vite thee here

Or thou me bid, that thou should'st coax
me so,

So that, perforce, when will'd, I cannot
go?

Rod. I would not coax thee, lady, no,
not I,

Though I did languish for thee, for thee
die.

Eud. Why then, thou'rt gallant; what
would'st thou of me?

Rod. Why thee, thyself; no other gift
but thee,

Gelded from whom I'm rack'd as a trou-
bled sea.

Eud. Thou cravest that 'tis not for me
to give.

Rod. What, art thou not thyself; thine
own to live,

To do, to will as thy propensities
Deem meet to dictate thee? Defense it is
That I must claim my right, to wield de-
fense

For thee from thine ungallant fop.

Eud. Expense

Thyself thy troubles that now trouble
thee,

Attack thyself if thou wouldst service me.
Thou art the fop, or if not fop, as near
A fop as any who to me are dear.

Rod. Oh heart! thou put'st a shadow
o'er my doom

Which death itself could brighten of its
gloom.

Am I a fop, a morsel in my broth,
Dank-refuse in the sea? There, there, I
troth

A love that springs from anxious, loving
heart;

Deny it not, make not my true love
smart.

Eud. Troth not a plighted love that
thou canst not

With equal strides requite as thou hast
trothed.

The name of love with ancestry so chaste
Meets desecration on the lips of him

Whose heart beats forth a life so base
impure
As thine sustains.

Red. What! must I this endure
From her whose love I counted as secure,
Which now falls off like a discarded robe,
To leave me standing nude as a beggared
Job,
Deprived of the habiliments of warm love,
Deprived of sweet Eudora's cherishing
love?

Now, heaven forbid! Such want of warm
array
Doth chill my soul to cold and seared dis-
may,
That my poor blood doth freeze and doth
congeal
Within my sluggish veins.

Eud. There, canst thou feel,
And feeling, canst thou still dwell on pure
love,
As though there were no heaven for us
above,
No purity in the love that comes from
thence,
To nourish in my heart a strong defense
'Gainst such poor stuff as thou dost offer
me,
The poorest that could come to me from
thee?

Thy oracle I'll repeat: 'Oh, heaven for-
bid!'
Destroy this farceful thing; from me it
rid.

Red. Didst thou, fair lady, ever stop to
note
How soft a thing a heart is that does dote
On some beloved soul? Didst thou ere
pause
To mark effect of words that are the
cause

Of that soft heart's repining? If thou
didst not
Look thou into these eyes to note the
theft

Which thou hast made—a loving heart
bereft
Of thine affections.

Eud. To gaze on what? Didst thou,
In willful humor, purposeless to aught,
Save that to entertain a straggler's mood,
In wandering slow about, now here, now
there,

Ere trace a thoughtless course o'er hill,
in dale,

In some cool shady nook, some still re-
treat,

In meadow, woodland, richly-scented
bower,

Lost to thyself, enrapt by fragrant flower,
Till lo! thou pause on some clear stream-
let's bank,

Enchanted, spell-bound, thine own heart
appalled?

To gaze on what? To gaze on thine own
self,

In image not quite as thyself, in all
Thy fair exactitude, but rather cast
In portray by a scrawl more rude, made so
By the rippling bosom of the streamlet.
Well, so I gaze on my sad heart, as I
Look through thine eyes on thine, which
mirrors mine

Back to mine own sad eyes.

Red. Why then, if thine
Besad like this and mine be sad like thine,
'Tis folly our ambitions with more sad-
ness to entwine.

Eud. Yet folly is the only course left
for us now to tread,
Since one of us is infidel, the other chris-
tian bred.

Red. Ah! sweet Eudora how canst thou
with heart as hard as iron
Surround my life so cruelly with miseries
that environ,

And make sad captive of my joys in
chains as hard as heart;

Oh! surely thou would'st not say nay, and
then let me depart!

Eud. Were I to say I would say yea,
but my conscience speaks to thee,
Thus it doth say a bitter nay, and sends
thee far from me.

Red. Dear love, I'm blest, thou would'st
say yea—

Eud. But my conscience would say
nay—

Red. Oh! what foul hand so foully
made

That foul thing we call conscience.

Eud. Soft! man,
Thou would'st not ridicule a friend in the
presence of his friend,

Would'st thou then desecrate my God, in
the presence of His friend?

Red. Thou hast a God, make me thy
slave.

Eud. When thou hast God, I'll be thy
slave.

Red. I will not be a slave to God.

Eud. Then I'll be none to thee.

Red. I would not have thee be my
slave,

Save that fond love doth make of thee;
I am to thee bound in strong love,
Thus I would have thee bound to me.

Eud. 'Tis useless for thee further to
discourse;

For plead thou till thy very throat grow
hoarse

I'm obdurate: I stand upon firm ground,
I'll have thee not though I two hearts do
wound.

Rod. In the light of all things born in reason's zone,
Why strain thy answer to this unjust tone?

Eud. By reason of celestial justice sent
To teach a temporal justice what is meant
By that we know as justice here on earth,
Which wroughts dismay when sorrows should be mirth,
Which proffers pleasures when men should be scourg'd,
Upholding vice when vice should be submerged.

Rod. Should my heart, bleeding, bleed then thus for thee?
Is this thy justice? Poor it seems to me.

Eud. That justice is the surest and the best,
O'ertopping deeds to crown love with love's crest,
Omitting naught that constitutes an end,
A goal of bliss where all things mutually blend.

Rod. Why such, methinks, will be my only goal,
When I have thee, my true heart and my soul.

Eud. Indeed I do, myself, so warrant this,
Else thou wilt ne'er me win, my lips ne'er kiss.

'Tis so decreed to be my fated fate
To love a tyrant who doth his God hate;
Well, be it so; until thy views do change,
Come not to me with love nor love's harangue.

My purpose question not; for purposeless—

Save to indulge a whim, this I confess—
I take my stand, my stand to strong defend,
Defending thee and me, thee strength to lend.

My heart unfolding like a fragrant bud,
Diffusing, loves thee better than life's blood;

If dear they be, let these dear words from me

Bring joy and comfort, peace and strength to thee;

'Tis all at present I have mind to give,
Unless, in reason, thou livest as I live.

Rod. By what shrewd argument, deep-seated awe,

By what infinite order or what law
Would'st thou have me to change my manners, modes,

To revolutionize my thoughts' abodes?
By what law would'st thou seek to low'r the skies

To earth's humiliating plane; or rise

Lewd earth to heaven's immense, ethereal sphere,
Surround pure heaven with earth's atmosphere?

Thou would'st not say the seas are out of place,
Nor the white-wing'd argosies that sail their face;

Else when doth water on a mountain stand,
Or ships go skimming o'er so much dry land?

Forgive me my infringement on thy speech,

But it is meet I quote thee, thee to teach:
Yea, 'we do view it in all nature's works,
In field, in sky, in air it surely lurks,'
Proclaiming to our senses, to our eyes
That all things have a place on earth, in skies.

Do nostrils greet th' aroma from the rose
That limbs may speed to haunts of carrion crows?

Do ears pause, list'ning to the lutist's touch,

That eyes may seek some chattering baboon's hutch?

Why were a man's five senses given him
But to enhance conception to a neater trim;

The blind, the deaf, the palsied, and the fool

Do learn but little in Dame nature's school;

And learning naught of her concinnity,
Wax worse denied her close affinity.

But I who have two eyes, have pow'r to see,

Two ears to hear, hear whilst mine eyes do see,

Who have a smell, a taste, a touch, a heart

To beat them all to rhythm and to art,
Have also reason and a reason's throne:

I am, fair one, a master of my own.

Eud. Well, if thou would'st thine own vain master be,

Pray thee, oh liege! vouchsafe to pleasure me

Two reasons why thou art an infidel;
Do this, and if they please, I'll love thee well.

Rod. Would'st pawn an angel fair to me induce

My chiefest hope, my heaven to traduce?
It may not be so pleasant for thine ear

To list to reasons that do not revere
Thine own opposing moods.

Eud. On me let blame
Lay his dread hand if thou dost aught defame.

Does this thee of thy fear exonerate?

Why then to me thy reasons pray relate.

[Enter HUMPHREY and ORESTES from behind, unperceived.]

Rod. Forsooth, I will have had when I have done

A meed worth having, that, so quickly won,

Methinks 'twill fright me much and pain me more

To own so much on such a pygmean score.

Therefore, Eudora, lest thou think'st with me,

With me and with my reasons disagree, I'll make them clear, precise, to thee impress

With their true meaning.

End. Haste: do not digress
Lest thy delay convict thee, me convince
That thou art without reason and defense.

Rod. I'm stronger in both nor I know not the one

I'm stronger in, nor that the weaker one, For but to say I'm strongest in them both.

End. Now, by my soul, upon my sacred oath,

I perjure not myself when I do swear
Thou canst no reasons give. Oh! what a snare

In which I have entrapp'd an unknown beast,

That, being captive, mourns for strength deceased,

That claiming both a reason and defense, Claims but their titles, both at truth's expense.

Rod. Avaunt! fair lady, do not perjur'd be

By swearing such an oath 'gainst mine and me;

For with two reasons I will now dispel
Thine ill-gain'd glory that doth in thee dwell.

The first of these let be my first defense,
For thee to please, and me to recompense:

For thee to know why I am infidel,
For me to prove there is no heaven nor hell.

Of all men's moods and whims this side the grave,

Hypocrisy doth most our hearts deprave;
Of all men's virtues here in this short life,

That virtue we call honor is most rife;
Of all extremes extant in this wide world,
Which wide-estranged tenets have unfurled,

Thus hypocritic humors rank the worst,
Whilst honor for its beauty ranks the first.

Oh, what a mix'd-condition'd world is ours

That men must jostle elbows in the bowers

Of their light recreations with their base
And vice-corrupted brothers in disgrace!

Was ever virtue pruned in human heart
So deeply rooted that to gain a start

Years intervene ere its first bud is blown,
When lo! 'tis found that virtue ne'er was

sown?

Why should the eye be coddled and deceived

By counterfeit of that to be believed?
Why should the heart accept a loving friend

Who is as viewed but for a venal end?
Yet such deceit is practiced every day

By man on man whene'er man thinks he may.

Had I a necklace made of hearts deceived,

Tears that have well'd from trusting hearts bereav'd,

With one I'd circle Saturn's satellites,
The other flood the seas to Saturn's heights.

We are but pygmies in an advanced age,
Some cringing, some libelling, some in

rage;

A cony fabled meeting humble newt,
So meeting to engage in wild dispute,

Is like the spirit of these envious times,
When boys are babes and men ne'er

reach their primes,
For very dwarfishness of mind and soul,

Reducing manhood to a seminole.
Now I bethink me of a certain one

Who would, methinks, deceive the shining sun

Were it within the power of a man
The ethereal space with treacherous

glance to span.

This one I've known quite well for years,
in truth,

Have known him all my life from very youth;

Nor good, nor honor hath he that is real,
Though good and honor doth he daily

steal

By usurpation and by practic'd fraud
Upon his fellows and upon his God;

For he must needs have God who would deceive,

Else he from goodness men would ne'er relieve.

Hum. Orestes, by Saint Jove, he doth mean me!

Ores. Ay, ay, my lord.

Hum. Hark! stay once more; let's see.

Rod. I also have a friend most kind and true

Whose name is Lubin, one who would not do

A fellow man a wrong for all the world,
But who doth ever cheer hearts that are hurl'd

Into the vortex of some deep remorse;
Condoling griefs, respecting some lone corse,

Perchance, which death snatch'd hastily away,

Whilst he from home and friends was far away—

But there; m'thinks thou know'st this Lubin well.

Eud. I do: nor doth a better man now dwell

Upon this loveless earth.

Rod. Thou pleasest me
When thou dost fairly speak my friend to me;

For once I mind when we were boys at school,

Brave Lubin, being my senior, strong and cool,

Like lightning laid a bullish ruffian low,
Who wantonly attacked me for his foe.

Now I did always love him till that time,
But then love to her highest realm did climb;

Nor never since has she been lower'd thence,

But still remains in my heart's prominence,

That hearing his bare name pronounce'd to me,

My heart doth pause expecting him to see;

For he is always in my heart, my mind,
Conceal'd from men within affection's rind.

This rind's so tender. Lo! it oft doth burst.

'Tis then with Lubin's love I am immersed;

'Tis then with Lubin's self I am possessed;

'Tis then with Lubin's hand I am carressed.

Eud. Thou art most right in loving Lubin so,

For he deserveth all thou dost bestow.

Rod. Ay, he to me is dearer far than I
Am to myself; for him I fain would die,
If but to die would be to make him live,
That dying hard I might him more joy give.

Indeed 'tis this same very stubborn thing
That causeth me my dearest friends to sting

Because I cannot be, nor do, nor say
As they themselves, in their own 'custom'd way.

As I love Lubin so I hate the one
Whom hating, I would likewise his haunts shun.

I ne'er can be a christian hypocrite,
Nor with an hypocritic christian sit.
Before I'll place belief in thy belief,
I'll have these blooming hypocrites make brief

Their visits to this extraneous place,
And rid the world of a time-worn disgrace.

Eud. 'Twould be to render earth yet more venust

But to corrupt the world to deeper lust.
Men's vices are as filaments in the air
Which settle unawares in eye, in hair,
Defying search, eluding capture still,
With fix'd persistence their poor victim fill

With grosser thoughts, intents of darker make,

Till he is tempted his own life to take.
But haste, thy other reason: it grows late.

Rod. Art thou not pleased out here with thy pleased mate?

Eud. Pleased only since I'm here to hear him reason.

Rod. When love prompts rest to talk is out of season.

Eud. Then let love romp to thus unbridle speech.

Rod. But love let loose will soon commit a breach.

Eud. Then muzzle her though thou must needs be dumb.

Rod. I'll muzzle her though I will not be dumb,

Lest my first speech be insufficient proof
To turn thy mind to mine and my behoof.
As long as great illustrious men are known

By virtue of their names and deeds alone,
They are great men indeed, whose far-off light

Falls brightly on their lessers in the night.
What dreams of greatness fill our awe-struck brains,

As we, admiring, watch their latest gains!
We are to them mere subjects, they our kings,

Fear'd and revered by us—poor cringing things.

A great name gets abroad o'er all the land,

From mouth to mouth transmitted, ever grand,

And as it speeds gains fragments of renown,

Till it attain distinction for its crown.
For each ear hearing each tongue swells to it

An added virtue, wisdom, and rare wit,
Till it become an oracle sublime;
The public mind condemns it as a crime,
If private understanding worship not
This king with reputation illy-got.
And so we all are crazy for a gaze
To gratify the craving and the craze.
Hearts cannot seek a rest till eyes have
seen;

Eyes restless as the hearts till they have
seen.

But there! it is the touch that ruins all,
Dissolves the myth, from mythic spheres
lets fall

Long cherished hopes we had to view a
God,

Regales our eyes with what? With
man's own fraud!

Still we are wiser having seen, ourselves,
Anticipated power dwarf'd to elves.

So with such wisdom I do turn to thee
And say; who knows, might not thy God
so be?

Eud. Art thou a living man to ask of
me,

A living woman who can hear and see,
Such sacrilegious questions of my God?
Begone pretense! Thou art thyself a
fraud!

Rod. But hear me, lady!

Eud. No! I'll hear thee not;
Thou hast condemned thyself.

[*Enter ADESSA and ALPHONSO.*]

Ades. and Alph. { My mistress! What?
 { My master! What?

Eud. [*To Ades.*] Peace!

Rod. [*To Alph.*] Cease!

[*Roderick withdraws to one side and kneeling, bows his head.*]

Ades. We have been looking high and
low for you,

We came to this same spot to look for
you,

But seeing not yourself sped swift away
To look for you some other obscure way.

We've searched in every rill, and delve,
and nook,

We've—

Alph. That we have, and I plunged in
the brook,

My head submerg'd, my feet without on
high,

My shoulders wet, my legs quite high and
dry.

Eud. Why, this is strange: I've been
here all the while,

Ere since I left my house in sudden style;
Straightway I bent my foot-steps to this
cover,

To 'scape that which I met in yon hot
lover.

But how is this? By thine own sheepish
looks,

Methinks thine eyes searched else than
delves and brooks,

Else thou perchance had'st seen me sit-
ting there,

Where thou dost see my torment droop-
ing there.

But come! let's haste away from this
dark place.

Ades. What's this, fair lady? I see in
your face

That which doth frighten me.

Eud. O, it is naught
Save that all lovers buy that's dearly
bought,

In pawn for which they squander life and
soul

To bury love at last in a grave-like goal.

Ades. Oh dear, these loves of yours
will bury you

Within your grave ere we have time to
rue

Your sad demise. But there! Am I not
right,

And have you not this very minute's
flight

Cross'd words with your sad lover, who,
lov'd well,

Is still repuls'd for being infidel?

Now I do have it by your guilty eyes,
His pensive posture; that to my surmise,

The broken spirit of a wounded bear,
As he lies dying in his lonely lair,

Exemplifies the humor of your lord,
Whose joys now die to requiems of dis-
cord.

Now, lady, can you heed to the tirade
That comes from one—though but your
serving-maid—

Who loves you dearly for your beauteous
self,

Nor asks a gross return in penury pelf,
But only what of love you have to give?

I'll tell you of a plot; your love may live
To its fruition's end. What say you to it?

Would 't please my lady to have us do it?

Eud. If but to please thyself, why yes
you may;

But to please me, I am afraid the day
Will be long dawning.

Ades. I pray you say not so.
Who knows to-day what vane the wind
will blow

Upon the morrow, or what near cleared
sky

Will burst a cloudless splendor from on
high.

Come, now, have better cheer.

Eud. Well, what's thy plot?
Perchance its mood will brighten mine;
why not!

Ades. It will: I know it will else love
 were dead,
 For through this plot you'll have your
 love to bed
 Ere one more setting sun turn down the
 lap
 Of one more faded day.

Alph. Why such a hap
 Methinks I could enjoy at such a time.

Ades. Avaunt, impatience thou! An-
 other time
 Will be too soon for thee, who, when
 thou dost
 Attain thine object's end, I fear will lust
 A sacred right: disgrace thy marriage
 bed.

Eud. Come lovers, both; I vow you
 both turn red
 On such a theme.

Ades. Not I!

Alph. Nor I!

Eud. Nor I!

Who then? Not one of us; O, innocence!
 We all would crave a love, quaff its
 essence,
 And flout its face. But there, let's to our
 plot.

Ades. Why simply told, the plot is this:
 Methought,
 Perchance—but soft; he may us hear;
 there now—

That what persuasion, love and friend-
 ship's vow
 Fail utterly to bring, perchance, to force
 By fright, so stubborn-like a will, coerce
 Him from his stubbornness, might be the
 means
 Of bringing out this freak from his ex-
 tremes.

Alph. But how do this? 'Tis not so
 easy done
 To fright him who so many fights has
 won.

Ades. Ne'er lived that warrior prone'd
 with thoughts so bold
 But that a vein of cowardice controll'd,
 Sometime, somewhere, some moments of
 his life,
 That to have fought at such weak times,
 the strife
 Would surely have been lost. Well, now
 mayhap
 We can wield such a fear o'er this mad-
 cap,
 By taking him in dead of night, in sleep,
 When eyes are closed from wary vigil's
 keep,
 To bring unto his half-wak'd vision's
 gaze
 Great marvellous demons, seething fires
 ablaze,

Till lo! he think hot hades scorcheth
 him,

And waking, pray to God to succor him.

Eud. How now, Adessa, thou art one
 rare bit

Of concentrated wonder and good wit.

Thy plot is wisely struck upon, most
 shrewd,

And may be wielded to its wonted good.

Now to bethink me of this hermit's place,

Doth swift recall to me the hermit's face.

I've heard it said by men who ought to
 know

That Gershom—so they call him—though
 man's foe,

Hath strange unearthly power, wielding
 it

At will and to what purpose he sees fit.

Indeed, I'll have him at the scene of fun
 To help us win that which is now most

won.

Come, we'll to Sebastian's house: there
 rendezvous

To meet this Gershom and his magic crew,
 And there promote a scheme to win this

fool

To a christian's way of thinking by God's
 rule.

[*Exeunt Eudora, Adessa and Alph.*

*Enter HUMPHREY and ORESTES from their
 concealment.*

Hum. Curse these long-winded chris-
 tians; 'twere better

To be hypocrite than have such long foul
 air.

Orestes, awake yon sleeping dog: Why
 Lo!

He sits asleep upon the magic rock,
 To sit on which is but to sleep forever,

Save to be woke by feelings of repug-
 nance

Wielded o'er the senses by another.

'Tis so: I'll wield him wakeful wretched-
 ness

To score accounts with him. He spurns
 us as

A hypocrite: I him an infidel;

Now we do meet in this appropriate spot,
 I'll turn the meeting to frustrate the plot

Whereby this scorpion is to be turned
 christian.

Orestes, yield him thy quick wakefulness
 By thy wakeful hand; make sure this

earnest jest,
 Whilst I the temper of my sword do test.

Ores. I pray you, sir, be cautious—

Hum. Bah! bah! bah! thou trembling
 sinner thou;

Look to this hap; that man or either I
 Upon this spot this very night shall die.

This world has held us twain quite long
 enough:

'Tis much too small to hold such cross-grain'd stuff.

Ores. It is as you do wish, but I would stand

You to a cooler course.

Hum. Avaunt, I'm dead
To thy advices. Go wake my adversary.
I'll put him in a state, indeed, contrary
To his present plight, or be thus wrought
myself.

Go wake my present foe.

Ores. Ay! ay! but watch thyself;
I fear he'll prove a wily adversary.

[*Goes and puts his hand on Roderick, who suddenly awaking, springs to his feet.*
Thy lady-love has left thee in the charge
Of two rare gentlemen who would enlarge
Thy views to more sedate reflections.

Hum. Come!
Aside, Orestes! Infidel, prepare thee for
thy death
Or thy defense!

Rod. Methinks cold death's defense,
Defending my grieved heart from its torments

Is all that's left for me. Defending else,
Nor hand, nor heart, nor will collude
their might

To shield me from cold death in any fight.
Hum. Would'st stand distraught for
me to murder thee,

Thee not to wield thy sword to vanquish
me?

Thou art a fool as well as infidel,
A coward, too, thou art. Prepare! to
hell

I'll send thy soul that thou may'st then
regret

Thine earthly life, sigh for one drop to
wet

Thy parched tongue.

Rod. Back fiend, foul hypocrite!
What would'st thou with my life?

Hum. I'd have thy life
To still thy caviling tongue, whose lash-
ings pour'd

But now into mine angry patient ears
Thy hate, thy fate; for see, in Vishnu
mood,

I will defend mine honor and my blood.
Rod. Now heart, leap not from out thy
narrow bounds

At this outrageous insult. Thou hypo-
crite; thou eaves-dropper,
Thou insidious, feline cur; I'll fight thee
for this fault;

Else otherwise these hands of mine were
free

From thy rank blood. Look to thy fate,
thou traitor,

For when Roderick unsheathes his sword
from off

His broad ensiferous loins, a death is nigh,
A death that's not his own, but that near
by.

Come, thou in Vishnu, I in Siva mood,
Will battle each, my god to make thine
brood.

[*They draw and prepare to fight.*

Ores. Soft, some one approaches!

Enter GERSHOM.

Ger. Stay! who would so
Trespass upon my premises to foe
Against each other. By God's love! Two
vipers drawn,

Wild-eyed, aghast, like bullocks in a
bawn

To end two vipers' lives. By Lucifer's
descent,

Though it were meet to let such snakes
be slain,

It were not meet to let the vipers twain
Die on my sacred privileges. Ho, fools!
I know ye both, and had I but to spit

By proffer'd choice to spit on one of ye,
I'd know not which to spit upon, else be
My heart misgave me that I spat not well
For leaving one unspat upon. O hell!
When did thy gates fly ope that two such
frauds

Escaped thy bourn? Earth now thy luck
applauds

In being rid of these, but would remise
Thy gift again to thee, for this disguise
Suits not this beauteous world! You vi-
pers you,

One with your eyes asquint to trace the
world

Of her renown'd inhabitants, the other
Posing as a god, nor neither worth
The water of a toad, but that to cause
Eruptions on the earth for goodly men
To mourn the presence of, let fall thy
swords;

Begone base wretches both and get thee
hence,

Lest I do call my imps to my defense!

Rod. Thou wicked wizard, fain would
I cope with thee,
Had'st thou not evil power with which to
see

Through premonition's eye the deeds of
men.

Ger. Ay! see them ere they spring
from out their ken,
The which in thy head finds its basest
base,

Breeding act to humanity's disgrace.

Rod. Silence, witch! 'Tis thine old
dotage saves thee,
And not that vested in thy haunted soul.

Ger. Yet 'neath this scorn'd power
wilt thou soon

Fall cringing at my feet in death's cold swoon.

Rod. I fear thee not! away!

[*To Hum.*] 'Tis well for thee that this intrusion came,
Else ere this time thy life had ceased to shame

The lives of worthier men.

Hum. Beware thy life;
I'll have it out with thee in later strife.

Ger. Beware you both, I'll smite you both with death,

Ere thou hast time to catch a last bare breath. [*Exit Roderick.*]

Hum. Come, friend Orestes, let's from this sorcerer's grot

To good Sebastian's, aid them in their plot.

Ores. Ay! ay! and to advantage by it, too.

Hum. To an infidel's sure misery, a christian's due.

[*Exeunt Humphrey and Orestes.*]

Ger. Now there be something in this scheming twain:

I would now I had let them their bones slain.

But soft, another comes.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Is thy name Gershom?

Ger. I'm called that,
man,
Though I've another name not known to man.

What would you have with me?

Mess. My master bids thee haste to him.

Ger. Who and where is your master?

Mess. My master is Lord Sebastian: he now is at my master's house.

Ger. Dost know the import of your swift dispatch?

Mess. Naught but that 'tis of much consequence.

Ger. Well, Gershom is much sought for, much retained,

Nor ne'er hath he a summons yet disdained.

Speed thou back to thy master, say to him,

'Twill give me pleasure to confer with him. [*Exit messenger.*]

There, I must haste. What! I myself in plot?

Soft; if I am, there's some will wish I'm not. [*Exit.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Room in Sebastian's house.*

Enter SEBASTIAN, ALPHONSO, ANTONIA, EUDORA, ADESSA and attendants.

Eud. How slow and tedious do these moments drag;
How creepingly these snails on missions lag!

Methinks did all the pleasures of this life
Last half as long as moments of such strife,

And they in their prolongings take joy's wings

To waft a soul beyond their borderings,
Life had been better gauged.

S. bas. Yet patience is the name
Of him who can so patiently acclaim

At all times, light or dark, as they do fall
To temporal man, a cheerful mood through all.

Whence comes the virtue patience but to cheer,

When circumstance yields naught save that that's drear?

Eud. But patience hath but little power to quell

My present agitation.

Ant. O! I can tell;
Ay mine, a mother's heart can tell what thine,

A lover's feels. Ne'er did a moment line
Himself to such an unproportioned length;

Nor ne'er did I feel such a need for strength

To stay me through these dragging moments drawn,

Until that knave return with old Gershom.

Eud. Methinks we all are with impatience tried.

Alph. Had I the knave I'd stretch his dronish stride.

Sebas. Perchance to talk of other things will serve

Our patience to support, our hearts to nerve

To do what is to do this very night.

Alph. Myself, I had as lief to wait till light.

Ades. What, art afraid 'f this Hermit and his imps?

Alph. Ay, more than I'm afraid to tell you it.

Ades. Well, I'll you this: thou coward, you'll rue it.

Nor ne'er wilt thou get me, for being 'fraid.

Alph. Then thou wilt always be a waiting-maid.

Ades. Which I will be before I be the mate

To one who carries such a coward's pate.

Eud. This maid of mine is chipper at all times;

Would I had her light heart, her laughter's chimes.

Sebas. 'Tis to be hoped and prayed that we're as gay

This time to-morrow, as we're sad to-day.

Enter HUMPHREY and ORESTES.

How now, good Humphrey, thou back here so soon?

I did not thee expect to see till noon Upon the morrow. How 'rt thou, Orestes?

Ores. Resting well, my lord; our God has blest us.

Sebas. How blest?

Ores. By speeding us to thee to aid thee in thy plot. By His dear guidance, we met thy messenger: learned from him what in the wind was brewing, gave heed to our two selves, one to another, in brief consultation, actuated by which, to final conclusion drew, that it would not appear unseemly in the act, decided therefore ourselves accordingly and posted us to thee to see the fun and aid in its promotion.

Sebas. Thou'rt welcome both; I give it thee, spiced to thy palate's taste, with my profoundest gratitude. But art thou not unusually pale, Humphrey?

Hum. A little incident occurred upon our way,

Which might have ended in a bloody fray; 'Tis this, my lord, to think what might have been

That makes me pale; 'tis naught. What's to begin?

Sebas. Naught but to wait till Gershom come to us;

For we rest on his skill to succor us.

Ant. And thy skill, too, Sir Humphrey, believe thou me,

I know thou art most cunning in thy thoughts,

As thou art cunning in thy thought's results.

Thy mind elastic, thy two hands are true To thine elastic brain; for what they do. Is not what they, but what thy will doth do.

Thy hands subservient to thy strong-set will,

Thy will subservient to that greater will Whence thou derivest thy Tyr-tireless strength,

Thy hands their cunning, and thy head its length.

Alph. [*Aside*] A devil's dowry is such vermin's wealth,

For thence come his great cunning and his stealth.

I'll watch Sir Loptur with his artful smile,

I warrant he is here to play his guile.

Enter Messenger.

Sebas. What, knave! thou odious potterer: why dost

Thou tarry so on this important trust?

Where's he for whom thou wert in haste dispatched?

Mess. I left him, master, with his own-self matched,

Nor ne'er could such another match be found

In one lone man that treads the mother ground.

Eud. Think'st thou he hath the wisdom, mother wit

To aid us in this plot, in urging it?

Mess. My lady, he's all wisdom and all wit,

A dark magician whose weird wand can flit

Before the gaze a thousand devil's imps, That revel in the air like lank-legg'd shrimps.

Sebas. But what said he toward coming, man?

Mess. Quoth he:

'Speed thou back to thy master, say to him,

'Twill give me pleasure to confer with him.'

Enter GERSHOM.

Ger. Thou art precise in memory and speech.

But how much later have I been to reach This late-wrought schemer's domicile than thee?

Mess. I have but come: belike you crowded me,

My very tracks thine for thine own fit use,

Befitting thy fleet foot, nor tight, nor loose,

To urge thee ever to a swifter gait,

To haste thee here with me, like mate and mate.

Ger. A pretty mate, thou fool, for one like me

Who holds domain o'er earth and o'er the sea,

Who can, if willed, transform thee to a sheep,

Or close thine eyes forever in deep sleep;

Set thee astride the mongrel-fashioned steed,

Or turn thee to a hungry swine; to feed Upon thy swine-coarse potale to grow fat,

Or change thee to a frightful mewing cat.

Eud. Hast thou indeed such marvellous power as this?

Does not repute speak thy strange deeds amiss?

Ger. My lady, thou wert better answered not
In words that savor of my magic grot.
Let that done in thy service soon disclose
To thee and to thy friends what Gershom
knows
Of the black and necromantic art and
power,
Before which man and beast alike do
cower.

Sebas. 'Tis well, Gershom, we'll test
thee of thy art,
And if thou hast ability to impart
What wisdom thou possessest to this
venture,
Thy presence here will rest beyond our
censure.

Ger. Thy needs will be attended with
painstaking,
For I surmise 'tis a goodly undertaking.

Ant. Is't good to slay the wolf to save
the fawn
That capers lightly o'er the terraced
lawn?
Or pluck with rough and indurated grasp
The babe from out the tainted mother's
clasp?
These things, O hermit, thou wilt say are
good,
As this that gives joy to chaste mother-
hood.

All things are good that hath a goodly
end,
No matter what the deeds be that portend
To its accomplishment.

Ger. Thou art not wrong
In these thy spoken views. The siren's
song
Heard floating on the still and calm-lit
night,
Enthralls the sense in rapture and de-
light,
Drives dull care thence to parts beyond
our reach,
Presents new bliss to us that doth us
teach
What 'tis to love; alas! to love in vain.
O siren's song, from thee there's naught
to gain
Save that the heart, the soul, the life
must hate,
Save that which ne'er its ardor doth
abate.

Yes, yes, my lady, thou should'st have
recourse

To any means a purposed end to force.
'Tis right if intent point to goodly end,
'Tis right if mother's joys are to defend,
Pure motherhood, its noble life uphold:

Then falter not, thy purpose make more
bold.

Ant. Ay, this I'll brace myself in all to
do,
Since justice crowns the deed to purposed
good.

O sir, my heart has been most sorely
grieved,
And I have found small joys in my past
life

Through all its tedious hours of day or
night.

Yea, nights to me have been mere night-
less days,

Days brightless with the nights of waking
sadness;

My days but dayless nights, as dark and
drear

As the darkest of dark nights, for aught
of cheer

The heavenly sun has given me; and all
because

My own of flesh and blood, God pity him,
Is shrouded in such madness.

Sebas. Come, sweet Antonia, court thou
a holier hope,

And rest thou in its friendly fold, we will
have cause

To don a cheerrier garb upon the morrow.
Come now, let's first stead hope by prac-
ticing

Our wits upon the furtherance of our
scheme.

Gershom, thou know'st, I believe, I have
a son named Roderick?

Ger. Ay, my lord.

Sebas. Who pleaseth a perverse mood
To be an infidel.

Ger. Ay, my lord.

Sebas. To the sorrow
Of his parents and his friends.

Ger. I see it now about me.

Sebas. Well now, it has been thought
upon

And purposed, too, to force this dolt, by
some means

Yet unhit upon save vaguely, to become
a christian

With his parents and his friends.

Canst thou help us in the undertaking?

Ger. Soft now awhile, my copious
thought needs here

A moment for reflection. This is an
Enterprise as intricate as 'tis good.

Hum. [To Orestes] Orestes, mark the
hermit well,

For he regards us with mistrustful eyes,
And if the chance to nip us in our own
designs

But come, he'll do it. Let fall, therefore,
no hint

To give him this advantage o'er our presence here.

Ores. Of his least move I will be close observer. Look, even now he moves to speak.

Ger. 'Tis done: this Roderick is already christian turned.

Sebas. Impossible; this is no jest, speak not in riddles to our anxious ears which starve for something more definite than innuendoes.

Ger. When Gershom opes his lips to speak, he speaks,
And when speech issues from his opened lips,

'Tis words which sparkle with a wit and sense

Of that discoursed. Well, so I will speak now,

And what the language of my lips may be Catch thou it to thy hearts as gentle truth, To gently nourish there renewed hope, That he whom you so love but not revere Will, ere another sun, be christianized, Revered by all and by all highly prized.

Eud. We do in interest grow; pray haste to thy mysterious direction; I am a-tremble with mine eagerness.

Ger. Thou hast a noble love, my lady dear,
That causeth thee thy trembling and thy fear;

But on the morrow thy love will requite A love as noble as thine is tonight.

Eud. I trust thee, Gershom, and I honor thee,

O, pray thee haste and win my love to me.

Ger. Now, ne'er did Gershom have so sweet a task

As this that thou dost of him sweetly ask. I'll crown all past attempts in this great deed.

Have I, my lord, thy sanction to proceed?

Sebas. I am as anxious as Eudora is.

Ger. And thou my Lady Antonia?

Ant. My answer is my lord's.

Ger. Then all are anxious for this one event,

Yet none more so than I myself am bent To cope the evils that have ye aroused To these marks of concern: misfortune housed

Within thy noble gates. What's th' hour, my lord?

Sebas. The clock even now chimes twelve. [Clock strikes.

Ger. A funeral knell

Proclaiming death to low laments that dwell

Now in thy souls. List to this ringing doom!

Its dying echoes toll woes to their tomb, Make beauteous once again this dismal earth

By resurrection of dead joy and mirth.

A most appropriate hour, my lord, is this

To wield thy son this metamorphosis;

An hour, which, at dead and hush of night,

Dooms day to death, gives birth to day and light.

But say, has thy son yet retired, my lord?

Sebas. The hour of ten saw him well lodg'd and feathered.

Ger. So: this were good. We'll soon have him well tethered

In the meshes of our dark authority.

Hast access to his chamber?

Sebas. Now that we Must ascertain. Perchance some mood of his

Hath locked us out. His idiosyncracies Do sometimes prompt him to exclude himself

Away from every one save from himself, And keep him thus until some happier humor

Doth release him.

Ger. Art sure no artful rumor Hath apprised him of thy plans?

Sebas. Why no; Unless the winds have whispered what we know,

No traitor would betray us in this deed.

Hum. [Aside] How his hawk's eyes upon my face do feed;

I must with wary hand beguile his wits, Ere he upon my own dark purpose hits.

Ger. 'Tis well, withal, to be upon our guard—

But there, let's haste, no longer to retard The progress of a plot that must needs win A fool from infidelity, a soul from sin.

Now gather close and pay as close a heed, Whilst I give brief direction for thy need.

I have a potion which when so applied, Wafts him, my victim, to deep sleep,

dream-eyed

To lie in comatose to suit my will

In all like death, yet never doth it kill.

My plan is this: to thus annul his sense, Whilst I command my imps to bear him thence

To my abode high in my mountain grot; For these familiar walls perchance will not

Tend toward deception's aid in wheedling him

To that complete deception my cave dim Is sure to guile him with. Alphonso thou,

Haste thee along to guide the footsteps now

Of these thy followers to the mountain's
brow.
Have naught of fear for Gershom will be
there
Ere thou hast climbed one-half of na-
ture's stair.
Be cautious all for there be lurking steep
That may precipitate ye to dark un-
fathomable deeps.

Eud. Ay, ay, Alphonso, haste thee,
lead the way,
This deed to accomplish ere the dawn of
day.

[*Exeunt all but Sebastian, Gershom, Humphrey
and Orestes.*]

Ger. My Lord Sebastian, pray thee
come with me,
Search thy house well, get thou the right-
ful key

To ope the door, beyond whose present
bar

Thy son secure doth sleep, from us as far
As though he slept on Neptune's distant
breast,
Higher a million times than great Olym-
pus' crest.

Sebas. Why tarriest thou, Sir Hum-
phrey, why not go
To hear the other's company? Why so
slow?

Hum. I did but wait a word of Ger-
shom's cheer;
My modesty forbids infringing here.

Sebas. Gershom, bid them depart, if it
thee please,
Whilst I go fetch my ring of household
keys. [*Exit Sebastian.*]

Ger. O modest spirit thou, whence
comest thy shame
To so beguile thyself, thyself defame,
Defaming modesty in thee to dwell.
This is my cheer: thou'rt welcome to my
hell! [*Exit Gershom.*]

Hum. Hear'st thou that, Orestes, the
fiend is a wicked sorcerer.

But haste, these moments are as drops of
crimson blood

When blood itself, has almost ceased to
flow,

For very rarity of the precious stuff.
Hast thou a dagger keen, unsheath it
quick.

Ere this damned fiend to his drowsed vic-
tim nears,

This dagger will have stretch'd the vic-
tim's years

Into eternity and eternal woe.

Orestes, quick; the dagger, let me go—
I know a secret passage to this room:

I'll use it now to haste impending doom.
Orestes heed, wait for me down beneath,

And when 'tis done I'll drop thee on the
heath

The bloody thing; make way with it at
once,

For it must not remain with us, to dunce
Wise deed to an unsystematic end.

Haste thee below whilst I above defend
The cause that brought us both so quickly
here:

Be brave Orestes, thou hast naught to
fear;

But me, think thou of me. O God! O God!
Preserve my strength, my motive justly
laud!

[*Exeunt Humphrey and Orestes separately.*]

SCENE II. *Bed Chamber of Roderick Showing
its Interior and Exterior Views. Roderick
Lying Asleep upon his Bed Within.*

*Enter HUMPHREY by Private Approach to
Chamber.*

Hum. Now Humphrey thou art here
use well thy time,
Have done the deed ere thou art caught
in crime.

But what a darksome place—yet dark-
ness will

Abet a deed whose import is to kill.
Fie! fie! unhappy wretch, why tremble
so

To stab one who is thine own mortal foe,
Who stands in way of thy deep coveted
wealth?

O hand be brave, dispatch with native
stealth

An act whereby thou wilt reap rich re-
ward

In double yield of purse: thy nephew
lord

And happy spouse to sweet Eudora's will;
Speed speed, this hindrance thou must
surely kill

To save thyself and nephew from dis-
grace,

Though it imprint woe on thy haunt-writ
face!

Why, is this sleep that holds my victim
bound?

'Tis more like death itself, this posture,
mound.

Well then, 'twere such a small thing to
imbed

This dagger in that now already dead.
There, there, what dead can breathe this
living breath?

Deceived illusion, thou deny'st kind
death;

Deny'st my freedom from a murderer's
taunts;

Deny'st my soul's redemption from hell's
haunts.

O God I strike, O God strike Thou not me
For striking him that will set me free,
free

From earthly woes; that will raise
heavenly hope.

Curse this dark place, mine eyes grow
dim, I grope

As in a blindness bound, yet open-eyed,
My sight doth mock my vision to deride.
I cannot do this thing but yet I must:

Why fool, why standest thou back on one
poor thrust

That will in all put death where now
there's life,

Put peace in thee where now there's
hellish strife!

Can I call God to witness this foul deed?
Fool, fool, God's eye, incessant in its
heed,

Looks down upon thy head, thy quivering
hand,

Spurns thee with scorn and silent reprimand;

Thy weakness sneers, thy cowardice
contemns:

Kill, kill thy victim ere He thee condemn!

[Approaches the bed and hovers over it, raises
his hand to strike, yet in an uncertain attitude,
still hesitates.]

Enter SEBASTIAN and GERSHOM on exterior
side of chamber.

Sebas. Quick Gershom and be soft, insert the key;

Unbar the way to our hope's victory.

Ger. The key doth fit its native hiding
place

As snugly as thy son lies in disgrace;
The bolt doth yield before its gentle touch
Even as he will yield to my hand's magic
touch.

Sebas. Then push it with thy magic
hand ajar;

Why tarriest thou the door to thus unbar?

Ger. For thee, Sebastian, who must
now depart;

I'd be alone in my specific art.

The presence of another might dispel
The magic of my wand. Haste to my
hell

That is to be thy son's ere dawn of day,
For his deliverance to his great dismay.

Sebas. Is this enforc'd in interest to the
deed?

Ger. It is, my lord, else I'd not have
thee speed.

Sebas. Well then, I'll go to be thy better
aid.

Ger. 'Twill aid me better than if thou
had'st staid. [Exit Sebastian.]

Now Gershom, concentrate thy force to
work;

Thy duteous subjects let no duty shirk.
Ope thou the door: behold him victim-
iz'd—

[Throws open the door, glides hastily and noiselessly
in the chamber, and sees Humphrey in the
act of stabbing Roderick.]

Damned fiend! Back! Back! Thou treach-
erous snake despis'd!

Darest thy ban'd fang hiss forth a viper's
hate,

Thy serpent's eye charm to a dreadful
fate,

With but an aim to murder as enthrall'd,
The object of my kinder aims forestall'd?

Fiends, furies, sieze the murderous hyp-
ocrite!

Enter PIKE, PEAK and POKE, with numerous
other imps who surround HUMPHREY.

Bear him away to the darkness of my pit,
Consign him to its torments till it please
My heart his soul from torment to ap-
pease.

[Some lead him away, some remain.]

Hum. Thou curs'd magician ill will it
serve thy boon

To turn a Humphrey into a graceless
loon. [Exit, guarded by imps.]

Ger. To turn a snake into a harmless
toad,

Save him defenseless from thy envious
goad.

O God! How canst Thou from Thy virtu-
ous place

Look down upon such fiends in their dis-
grace;

Refusing discipline to overthrow
These studied evils of man's direst foe!

O Thou wise King, in pity art Thou wise,
Earth's Benefactor dwells beyond the
skies,

Unseen, to guage men's deeds, what they
may be,

His censure slow, man's meed eternity.
If I were God, had God's infinitude,

Yet still myself, as He hath me imbued
With human passions, having such a
power,

Methinks my passions would surmount
the tower

Of my endow'd infinitude. From high
I'd bolt destruction to this hateful spy,

Though all the thunders of broad heaven's
reserve

Were called to kill, I'd ne'er my purpose
swerve.

O God, when I do give my thoughts to
Thee,

Thy greatness, matchless strength, divin-
ity,

Thy incomparable chastity, Thy might,
How dwarf'd do I appear in my own
sight!

But then, whilst I have power to wield a
cause,

It is not meet to hesitate, to pause,
When others so depend upon my skill
To aid them in their griefs, their troubles
kill.

Cóme, come Gershom, where is thy
wonted might?

Hast thou grown vapid? Art thou weak
to-night?

No, no, as thou hast this foul murderer
doomed,

So wilt thou see him almost murdered,
groomed

To her whose virtue is as God's own
light,

The happy bride to him whose present
plight

Degradeth her to harbor such a love,

So like a lion courted by a dove,

But who by virtue of this night's great
deed,

Will give unto Eudora her just meed,

Requiting as requited, loving loved,

Lo! two, yet one, two doves though
singly doted.

Come imps, prepare, this burden to trans-
port

Beyond these limits hence to our resort.
Sort, let this potion waft him to deep
sleep,

Lest intimation of the act do creep

Into his half-waked brain to thus dispel
Poor nature's trance in which he now
doth dwell.

There, bear him hence to our dark moun-
tain grot,

Nor stop till thou hast reached the magic
spot

Where magic reigns on earth, in sky, in
air,

Striking dismay to them that tarry there.
Away, away, thy nimble limbs to stride

A lightsome gait far up the mountain side:
Repose thy burden when thou reachest it,

Upon my downy couch, there let him sit;
For to lie down constraineth any sight,

And I'd have him see all to see to-night.

[Exeunt imps bearing Roderick away.]

'Tis well O Gershom, thou art ever great,
Thy passions staid, ambitions satiate.

Fly fly thou home, a victory yet to gain,
Disdaining this as thou wilt that disdain.

[Exit.]

SCENE III. A Mountain Gorge.

*Enter ALPHONSO and Attendants followed by
EUDORA, ANTONIA and ADESSA, with
guards, etc.*

Ant. O dear, my o'er-strain'd limbs,
long past endure

Refuse their functions. I must here
immure

Myself, my wearied self, and pause to
rest

To stay exhaustion that hath me op-
press'd.

Why nature has embastion'd her rude
hills,

Bisecting chasms with her rippling rills
In this impassable manner, I am dumb

For want of explanation, lest 'tis to numb
My poor tired limbs for plodding, strain-
ing so,

'Gainst their own inclination ever slow,
'Gainst this incline of mountain-graded
steeps,

'Gainst pitching down far into mountain-
ous deeps.

My years have made me dotish and in-
firm,

My sorrows do infirmity confirm;
The sorrow that impell'd me out-to-night

Confirms infirmity and in such a might,
That I, o'er-come, succumb beneath its
weight:

Friends, tarry here, my strength to re-
instate.

Alph. God save me from another such
a night;

I would to God it were now broad day-
light.

Ades. And I would have another
braver guide

Than thee, thou coward in a coward's
hide.

Alph. Thou art affright thyself, thou
know'st thou art,

Else why look wildly round and often
start

As though some wicked spirit haunted
thee,

Compelling yet constraining thee to flee?
Now as for I, myself, as I'm a knave,

I wonder at myself for being brave
Sufficiently to say that I'm affright,

Sufficiently to come out in this night,
This mountain gorge, this hideous, howl-
ing place.

There, there, thou art affright: 'tis no
disgrace

If thou art truly so to say thou art,
But 'tis disgrace to fear, deny the part

With trembling ashen lips, with sinking
soul,

That doth evince thy fear, defy control.
Ades. My lips a'tremble, my lips ashen
white,

My soul a'sinking, and on such a night!
Bah! bah! This moonlight would allay
my fear.

If fear I had, which I have not, my dear.

Alph. Why, by my love, this "dear" is first I've heard

Thee utter since thou hast on me conferred

Thy golden heart with all its golden worth,

Nor gentle words, nor fond, in love nor mirth

Hast thou addressed me till this very night,

Till now, this moment. Oh, thou art affright,

Else why should'st thou now humbled call me dear,

When thou at other times offend mine ear

With coarser epithet? Why then thou'rt free

From fear. O woman thou, I now have thee

Where every woman once has stood at bay,

Defeated, wroth, chagrin'd, lost in dismay

At being read aright by her right lord, Sham'd for her fickleness, acts unto-ward.

Eud. Come, come, cross'd lovers, stop thy tongues' wild pace.

To indulge light moods at such a time and place

Is not discreet when other moods oppose. What, ho! attendants, what's the stir?

Who goes?

Att. Soft, hark! faint voices on the nether air

Come floating to my fright-wrought, sensitive ear

From spectral depths below; my heart appalls

To list to sounds from nature's haunted halls.

Eud. Then thou'rt unfit to guard the life of one

Who scorns such fear, or any 'neath the sun.

Att. Ay, lady, but—but this is 'neath the moon,

Whose shadows turn brave man to gibberish loon.

Eud. Why, then, I'll say beneath the termagant sky;

Why need of fear as long as God's on high,

With care directed to his subjects all? Fool, fool; thy faith, thy trust in God is small.

See else yourself, there is no cause for fear;

For these faint, distant voices that you hear

Come only from Sebastian and his friends,

Whom God, perchance, in our extremity, sends

To our assistance. Come, Antonia, dear, Arise to greet thy lord approaching near;

Let his strong arm supply thy need to thee,

Supporting that no other arms are free To ramble o'er.

Enter SEBASTIAN, LUBIN and THEOPHILUS.

Alph. Hail, Lord Sebastian, hail! Hail thou good Lubin and Theophilus, hail!

Thy presence here doth serve my soul to ease

From foolish fright that now my soul doth tease.

Seb. Why tarry'st thou?

Alph. To let thy wife have rest; Long ere this stop she had o'er-taxed her best.

Seb. What thou, Antonia? God forgive the vein

Subjecting thee to this unnatural strain.

Ant. There, there! Could any wife and mother true

Remain behind when such work is in view?

Seb. Ay! thou art true as thou wert truly won;

O, would I had as true and good a son As thou art wife—had I but that as this,

Indeed would bliss be crown'd with sweetest bliss.

Ant. And would a mother's love be crowned with love,

A father's pride with pride. O, God above;

Hast Thou an ear to give unto the griev'd, An eye to note th' afflicted and bereav'd,

A heart to pity them in sore distress, A hand to help, to strengthen, and caress?

Lend Thy kind heed to this griev'd couple now;

Let kindly looks arch kindness in Thy brow;

Let pitying heart unfold her priceless hoard;

Let hand outstretch to bless new joys restor'd.

Eud. O, good Antonia, what a heart thou hast,

That, first in sorrow, thou should'st be the last

To censure Heaven but to give Him praise:

We all were better had we thy just ways.

Ant. Thou art thyself as good as I dare be,

For thy benevolence and thy chastity.

Sebas. Thou'rt both like two white daz-
zling flakes of snow,
That for thy goodness 'twould be hard to
know
Which is Eudora's, which Antonia's place,
But for dissimilitude of form and face.
But there, had we not best resume our
way?

I note a glim in the east that heralds day.
This Gershom will, I fear, dislike ap-
proach
That on his patience doth so much en-
croach.

How now Eudora, do I note thy gaze
Of deep surprise, of justly-wrought
amaze,

Directed on Theophilus, Lubin, here?
I should ere now have explained their
presence here.

'Tis simply this: when I did leave my
house,

All in a fever to o'er-take my spouse
With her accompanying train, and pity-
ing friends,

Who should I hap upon but these two
friends,

Who, you all know, are friends to him,
likewise,

That causeth all our discommodities.
Well, when I told them of our wild affair,
They pled to come along—so here they
are.

Ant. Thou'rt welcome both, good
friends, to our adventure.

The more because you join us in our
censure,

Yet in our love for my perversed son.

Theo. We thank thee, lady, for we love
thy son.

Lub. And 'tis our love that prompted
us to come

To aid in his conversion, turn him from
His dark, oblivious course.

Ant. O, you are kind!
Two such true friends, we search long ere
we find.

My lord, methinks now with thy strong
support,

I can resume my way. We must report
To Gershom ere the sun his vision peeps,
Above horizon's rugged line of steeps,
Lest his bright eye the hermit's pow'r
dispel,

His imps abash, destroy his frightful hell.

Sebas. Ay! ay! let's haste ourselves—
Enter ORESTES hastily.

Ores. Friends, pardon me!
But is my friend, Sir Humphrey, not
with ye,

Nor been with ye within the hour ago?

Sebas. Why, no, Orestes.

Ores. He left me on the lawn
To wait his pleasure from your house.

'Tis strange,
I ne'er did see him leave the place.

More strange,
For I did search for him; more stranger
still,

For ne'er could I espy a frieze or frill
Of Humphrey's absent self. I fear me
much

He's fallen in this cursed hermit's clutch.

Sebas. Why this, indeed, is strange
whose strangeness is

To me as strange as any stranger is
To strangest strangenesses. Art sure you
search'd

In every nook, high, low, smirch'd and
unsmirch'd?

'Tis much too strange for me to soon be-
lieve

That Humphrey would our trusting
hearts deceive.

Ores. I left your house as silent as the
tomb,

Nor no one place more silent than the
room

Sir Humphrey was last seen within.

Ant. My lord,
Dost thou forget that 'quester'd stretch
of sward,

Whose foliaged arbors well might screen
a man

From Io's argus-watcher, Juno's scan?
Why, then, could not Sir Humphrey have
escap'd

These lesser watchful eyes that are not
shaped

With lens so piercing as great Juno's
eyes,

Which could, themselves not pierce
through this disguise?

Sebas. Why even so, Orestes, thou'rt
illus'd,

Or, if not this, say thou wert so enthus'd
With thoughts of our anticipated freak,

That thou grewest weary and thine eyes
grew weak

With drowsiness. Say that, perchance,
you slept,

And whilst you slept Sir Humphrey past
you crept.

Say anything, Orestes, sad or glad,
Save that Sir Humphrey is so monstrous
bad

He'd do aught wrong to loving, trusting
friends;

But rather naught save that from which
depends

That strongest friendship's sponsor of
good will,

Without which sponsor friends would
soon friends kill,

Soon murder all great ties which bind
great souls,
And friendship's love and all that love
controls.

I'll warrant now Sir Humphrey has long
since

Reached Gershom's dark abode and his
dark imps.'

Come let us haste, his patience not to tire,
Lest we ourselves incur great Gershom's
ire.

Ores. It may be so, my lord, or so I'll
say,

With your permission may I lead the
way?

These hills are to my feet like velvet
stairs,

So easy of ascent are they and theirs.
Their widest fissures I do span with ease,
So come my friends, I'll guide ye, ye to
please.

Sebas. Thou could'st not please us with
a welcomer word;

On, on, Orestes! this waste is absurd.
Friends get you gone; away, away with
ye!

Come sweet Antonia, rest thyself on me.
Thus do you give my life its chiefest joy,
To counteract the pain caused by our boy.
Thus go we to this grot in hope and fear;
God grant we may return in hope and
cheer.

[*Exeunt, Sebastian supporting Antonia.*]

SCENE IV. *Gershom's Grot.*

Enter GERSHOM in State with Train of Attending Imps.

Ger. Are all things ready?

Imps. Ay, my lord!

Ger. Then heed;

Stand well thy guard. Let not our pris-
oners feed

Upon the ravenous thought of how to
'scape,

And feeding well, digest the thought to
shape

Digestion's organs, to its freedom find
Aperture, small or large, or any kind
Through which to strain their offal bodies
out.

Be cautious, true, let there remain no
doubt

As to the sound security of the chain
Which menacles hand and foot 'gainst
ambitious brain

To be at liberty set. Stay! when I sound
The signal word, bring him whom sleep
bath bound

Forth from his loathsome cell my wrath
to meet;

Do all this well: be punctual, wise, dis-
creet.

Some ready be to welcome them we
expect,

Lest they conclude their presence we re-
ject;

And when they arrive upon the grot's
terrene

Place them where they can see, them-
selves unseen.

Guard their demeanor from rash over-
tures,

Lest they force arms to peri-curvatures;
And place constraint o'er undue haste
and din

Of chattering that their tongues might
revel in.

Preceed this by example set thyselfes:
Be ye thus sage and mute like dumb-
mouth'd elves.

Be also mild and courteous, do not flaunt,
But grant them any whim their hearts
may want.

I'd make this farce to bait this foolish
fish,

Appear to him whose sense it is my wish
To so delude, as some dread horrid dream,
His soul to torture with strange sights
that seem

Before his awe-struck eyes to paw and
prance,

Like countless devils in a devil's dance.
Away, away! each to his post repair,
For soft! they come. Remember and
beware!

*Enter ORESTES, SEBASTIAN and ANTONIA,
EUDORA, ADESSA, ALPHONSO, LUBIN,
THEOPHILUS, Attendants, and followers.*

Welcome thou, my friends, retire to
where conducted,

That you may see, unseen, uninterrupted;
For what you see to-night perchance will
awe

The bravest one among you, thy blood
draw

Away from fear-still'd heart, thy lips
turn white

Thine eyes to witness such a painful
sight.

Lose not thy trust in my esteemed worth,
Pray thou allow not anxious hearts to
dearth

The trance-like spell I wield o'er son
and friend

By cries of tongue to cause a fruitless
end.

My might is great, protection greater yet,
Nor greatness knows no bounds save
more to get.

Yea, he who knows the Tao needs not
fear

The bite of reptiles, beasts that prowl
 anear,
 Nor birds of prey that soar the lither air,
 Disporting in their realm so light and
 rare,
 Yet pregnant with foul matters from be-
 low
 That fires the fatal swoop of the fatal foe
 Down on the earth, down on earth's hab-
 itants
 That live unshielded and without de-
 fense,
 Save for protection rendered by Tao;
 Invulnerable 'gainst death and living foe.
 Thus vested in such greatness and de-
 fense,
 Fear not that I will give thy hope offense
 Save that for his advantage and content.
 Tomorrow thou wilt say this hour was
 spent
 To richest profit and to noblest ends.
 Think, think, O souls, what on this hour
 depends!
 Is love a thing so meagre and so small,
 That love afflicting makes hearts chaff
 and gall
 At love's afflicting bane that renders
 new
 Affection's ties, makes them more
 stanch and true?
 This discipline borne upon a wayward
 son
 Racks but to reap that which could ne'er
 be won
 By aught of else save necessary pain
 Inflicted on him loved, his love to gain
 In later times when he then sees the
 good
 Of a parent's jurisdiction, fatherhood.
 Now we have here two vipers deep in
 sin,
 To gaze on whom for beauty each might
 win
 The admiration of admiring eyes—
 Such as the Dorians gave to eulogize
 The snow-white pair, the princely dei-
 ties—
 But for their sins which turn to obsequies
 The latent humor of our wrathful gaze
 To chast them with the horror of hell's
 blaze.
 I'll stand condemner with Postumius
 grace,
 Yet not to pray but to condemn the base.
 As condemnation merits punishment,
 I'll cast them both to outer banishment,
 There to lie low in everlasting dread,
 Forever dying, dead, yet never dead;
 Forever living in this livid state,
 Nursing hell's agony, this to be their
 fate.
 This our intent to make real seem unreal,

Unreal seem real and so with Roderick
 deal.
 What ho! foul imps: bring forth the in-
 fidel,
 His sense to craze by goadings of our
 hell! [*Exeunt three or four imps.*]
 Friends, hark! when they do usher Rod-
 erick in,
 Nor stir, nor wince, nor groan, nor raise
 a din.
 Have patience, faith: do this to humor
 me,
 That, if thou dost, I'll give back unto thee
 A comelier son and friend than ere be-
 fore
 Thine eyes have gazed upon; one to
 adore.
 Screen well thyselfes.

Re-enter imps bearing RODERICK.

There now! my charm hath lasted long
 and well;
 The enermugen needs diversion's spell
 To spice his torment, cause his soul to
 quake,
 His heart to burst, eyes bulge—awake!
 awake!

[*Awakes suddenly and stares about him in bewilderment and fright. The imps retire leaving him standing before Gershom who holds him in a semi-state of catalepsy, spell-bound, yet alive to the horridness of his surroundings.*]

Infidel!
 Hast thou a word to say for thy doom'd
 self;
 And know'st thou where thou art, or that
 thou hast
 This minute come to hell through port of
 death,
 Or what sad grievance brought thee here
 aghast?

Rod. What sayest thou? What ful-
 some place is this
 That ears do hear hot seething fires hiss;
 That eyes in office to my senses render
 A scene so foul that in me doth engender
 This mighty, trembling fear, this horrid
 dread?

O where am I? Dost live or am I dead?
Ger. This is thy hell, thy narrow,
 seething hell,

In which to live, to die, forever dwell!
 'Tis life from death, death after living
 life,
 'Tis death from life, life after dying
 strife.
 'Tis thus thy death, thy life: thy life, thy
 death,
 Thy hell, thy home, hell's-fire thy only
 breath.

Rod. Last eve I, in my chamber, sleep-
 ing, lay;

But this—what horror's this? O, what dismay
I now awake to? What surroundings
fell?
Has death encompass'd me, and is this
hell?
Poor spirit of a man whose pride was
once
The reigning king of prides! Alas, thou
dunce,
Thou fool, where flies thy spirit and thy
pride
That demons have the power thee to de-
ride!

Ger. Thou art thy spirit but pride
knows naught of thee,
Down, down, therefore, bend thy stiff-
temper'd knee!
Let fall thy haughty gaze, this is not
earth,
But hell where fools are taken for their
worth.

Rod. Then earth were hell, and this
must needs be earth
Since earth, my hell, made joy in me so
dearth.
Why then, if this be earth, the other hell,
And earth a hell, say I, on earth I
dwell!

Ger. What good to thee, if hell be only
earth,
Thou dwellest still in hell. Cease mock-
ing mirth
That only can condemn thee all the more,
For striving out of hell to shrewdly soar.
Dost any ling'ring thought in thee yet
live
That this is earth, cease thou the thought
to give
Existence in thy frenzied brain: for lo!
Raise thy deluded eyes to heaven, and
grow
Accustom'd from thy hell to heaven's
bliss,
And by compare observe what thou dost
miss.
There sits thy mother, there upon her
right
Thy father stands enshrined in heaven's
light.
Good Lubin, too, that friend whom thou
dost love
Enjoys great prominence in that land
above.
Lo! by his side, Theophilus, mild and
true
In heaven dwells with naught on earth
to rue.
Why there's Alphonso, there's Adessa
fair:
Great angels that on earth could not
compare

With thee no more than lamp to sun
With sun his brightest, lamp its end nigh
run.

Who else is there? Who else? Why
look'st thou wild
Upon such purity, love, grace undefil'd?
Thine eyes blaspheme, as thou thyself
art curs'd,
When they do feast on her who is im-
mers'd
Of God's redeeming grace. O, infidel!
Dost thou doubt now that thou dost grope
in hell?

Rod. O God, canst thou rule power in
this curs'd place,
Strike me oblivious from this deep dis-
grace!
Hell's torture might I brave without a
cry,
But not those pitying looks from friends
on high.

[Falls upon the ground, overcome.]

Ger. Ha! be thou brave that thou de-
fiest me,
Thy courage quick I'll test; thou may'st
then see

What 'tis to scorn perdition's dreadful
bane

Whose foul effects allayeth not a grain,
But ever groweth in intensity
To gratify a mad propensity
To wrought revenge on thy poor doom-
cursed soul,

That casteth thee beyond thy friends'
condole,

Who disappear behind fair heaven's gate
To leave thee to lament thy fearful fate.
Thy doomed soul must suffer as it pleased
Thee to defy great Heaven's love unap-
peased.

Hell claims her victim by ordained right,
Nor naught sufficeth but thy soul to
blight

Forever in her flames. O, infidel, pre-
pare,

Thy doom is fixed, nor friends, nor God
can spare

Thee now from hades' fire engulfing thee;
This is thine end, thy fateful destiny.

Ne'er didst thou hear such thunders as
hell's bolts

Whose deep-toned mutterings belch
forth trembling volts;

Ne'er didst thou dream of such fear-
fetching imps

As these that are hell's prancing, pan-
dering pimps.

Ne'er didst thou cringe before a might-
ier power

Than this before the which thou now
dost cower.

Die, die, yet live, a living death for thee,
Dwell ever in perpetual misery!

Rod. O God, were I out 'f this accursed
place

Forever would I dwell in Thy good grace.
On earth once more I'd serve Thee well
and true;

Alas, too late! I meet a fool's just due.
God! God! death creepeth o'er my
senses swift:

Eternity is death—hell's ransom-gift.

[*Sleeps.*]

Ger. Well done! He calls upon Jeho-
vah's name;

Tomorrow's sun will see him humbly
tame.

Imps, speed! transmit him to his lone-
some room.

[*Exeunt Imps, bearing Roderick.*]

Sebastian, friends, come forth! Another
doom

Awaits another fool, a villain, beast,
Whose thirst for murder ne'er hath found
its feast;

But that the thirst remaineth in his heart,
Ne'er can the feast cleave murderous
jaws apart.

*Enter SEBASTIAN and the others from their con-
cealment.*

Sebas. O, wondrous man! The end is
that I crav'd:

I feel within my heart my son is sav'd.

Ger. Peace! voice not praise on my
poor pygmean power

Which is God's own that in me hath its
dower,

That, wielded through this medium of
man's hand,

Has served thy son to save by reprimand.

But stay, the cravings of this night are
not appeas'd:

There yet remains another, God be
pleased,

To chastise and to punish for an act,
Though not committed none the less a
fact;

Since he with murder lurking still in
heart

Confronts a murderer's doom; for 'tis no
part

To do what intent prompts withal to do,
Though unaccomplish'd deed base will
ensue,

So much as 'tis a part to will the thing
Crav'd for, frustrated. This is what doth
bring

Worse condemnation on the head of him
Whose heart, approving, whose hand,
murderous, grim,

Is staid from doing what is in the heart

By timely interruption whose no part
Of its existence comes from willer's will,
Whose deepest motive is one but to kill.

Sebas. Why, who is this?

Ger. Why, who? Canst thou not
guess?

And guessing must thou ignorantly di-
gress

From sighting true and skillful guessing
aim

On one who rests even now 'neath thy
just blame?

He who, himself, digressed from thee in
time,

But for my presence, to commit this
crime?

Sebas. What! Humphrey?

Ger. Humphrey, ay! indeed.

Sebas. Pshaw! pshaw!

No other man on earth observes that law
Which governs christian deeds to fellow
mate

More closer than Sir Humphrey does.

Eud. Now wait!

I have myself suspicion'd for a time

That Humphrey's heart approves not acts
sublime,

That acts themselves screen but a heart
unfit

For any save a hateful hypocrite.

Sebas. O! what a baneful thing sus-
picion is,

Whose venom wroughts within the hu-
man mind

Deep miseries of mistrustful, trusting
love,

That doth outrival in its venom'd force
The deadly scorpion or the adder's tooth;

Makes hate a murderer of forbearing
love;

Makes love her own destroyer, killing
love;

Denudes her of her beauty and her
flower,

Supplants her grace, her wisdom, and her
power

By crowning on her devastated throne

A royal tyrant, causing hearts groan
Beneath the thralldom of a king, called

hate,

To ever curse their sad unnatural fate.

The amaranthean bud with perfume rare,
The breath of frost its fragrance doth im-

pair;

So virtue sitting deep in true-born heart
Doth fade and die, doth from its virtue

part

Touch'd by suspicion's tainting, impure
breath;

O where, O where can be a sadder death,
Or where a fouler wielder of a death,

Or where a comelier victim of a death?

Ger. Why, for the first had it not been for me,
I could ere now have shown the first to thee.
As for the second, thou wilt soon see it
As thou dost gaze upon the hypocrite.
The third, though it has not as yet been done,
To-morrow thou wilt see it in thine own son;
Not comely victim of a cruel death,
But comely son saved twice from cruel death,
That as thou on his beauteous form wilt gaze
To mark enhancement in him thou wilt praise
And bless the act that foil'd a traitor's scheme
From robbing thee of him whom you esteem;
To aid the which, thy thanks to propagate,
Compare him then to such a cruel fate,
Then let thy voice cry out in stifled breath:
'O, where a comelier victim of a death!'
For virtue newly graft in new-born son,
Is virtue's virtue being newly won.

Sebas. How now, mysterious man, thy phrases set
'Twixt illative conjunctions do beget,
As husband to my fractious, wife-like mind,
Strange sons of thought in her, sons so unkind
That I, perforce, I, my mind's strict abode,
Have been forsaken by this episode.
Do I infer from thy misshapen speech
That Humphrey would commit so gross a breach
As that to murder my beloved son?
Is this the meaning of thy words just spun?

Ger. The very same, my lord.

Sebas. Why, if this be,
Bring forth the villain, let me his face see,
That if he look but innocent and shy,
I, mindful that he's hypocrite, will fly
Straightway to the conclusion of his guilt,
And punish him accordingly.

Ores. Thou wilt?
And where is thy authority to wield
Such punishment?

Sebas. Why, that of son to shield,
Of motherhood's long preservation stay
Against such tyrants, fiends that would
so slay
An unsuspicious, unoffensive soul.
Why dost thou ask?

Ores. Why do high waters roll
To nether lands, but that to seek some place
More native to their moods and native grace?

'Tis so my query poureth in thine ear
Which doth befit it more than my mouth's gear.

Eud. Why, Lord Sebastian, this being
Humphrey's friend,
'Tis only meet that Humphrey he defend.

Ger. Then I would say, watch friend
as well as him

Who had the heart to do a murder grim;
For what the one would do the other would:

A beast does stand, some time, where
others stood

With instincts like the other's brutish will,

That as the others killed so he will kill.

Ant. Now, I know not the beast Ores-

tes is,
But I feel very loth to stigmatize
With such a beastly cognomen as this
One who has always rested well and strong

In my heart's confidence as Humphrey has.

Yet if the crisis of his presence prove
To show him guilty, God knows it will move

This quondam gracious, trusting heart of mine

To thoughts of vengeance 'gainst a studied crime,

Whose gross committance would have killed my son,

Upon the very night that he was won
From darkness to the beaming light of God.

Oh haste! bring forth this man accused
of fraud,

And let him prove his innocence, or die
Here on this very spot before mine eye,
That it may feast upon so foul a wretch
Who would so dare raise murderous,
treacherous steel,

In wanton humor wantonly to deal
A noble life its death that now doth live
Secure from death that Humphrey would
him give,

More nobly in the sight of Heaven's eye,
Than if in heaven he lived, on earth did die

A death so foully wrought.

Sebas. Come Gershom, speed;
Bring forth the culprit, we his sin to
meet.

God will, I know, forgive my hand his death,

If it be meet to punish him with death;

As who can say 'tis kind to let wild beast
Prowl man's demesne, upon the innocent
feast.

'Twere kinder in the sight of God to slay
Unruly spirits that on men do prey.

Go Gersham go, fetch here this murder-
ing thing,

That we upon his head our wrath may
fling.

Ger. Stand well away yet well beside
thyselfes,

Thus fortified to guard from him thy-
selves;

For who can know but desperation might
Add murder here to annals of this night.
Attendants! Guards! Look to your arms,
prepare

A villain now to meet and bravely dare;
For though the limits of his iron chains
Constraineth him, who knows but he dis-
pains

Their iron strength, and with a mighty
wrench

Snap them asunder, so without a blench
Himself seek vengeance ere we seek his
death.

Therefore be cautious. *[Exit.*

Alph. Methinks if I had breath,
Or feet, or legs, or any part of me,
That I might wind, or run, or hear, or
see,

I'd quick away from this death-sickly
place.

My God! I will be kill.

Ades. You! who would care
To kill a bullock framed to shape so spare
As thine ungainly bones and shriveled
meat;

Rest easy, none would slay so spare a
neat.

Alph. I would my spareness spare me
from his gaff;

I have no mood to root mine epitaph
Nutritiously above the earth to rear
Its head, whilst I below do shrink and
sear.

Re-enter GERSHAM with HUMPHREY in chains.

Alph. Lo! Fenrir fettered falls;
But let him loose, he galls.

Ger. Come fiend, don grace on thy dis-
grace, since thou

Hast donned disgrace on grace, which
marks thy brow

With Cain's disgraceful brand. Here are
thy friends.

Dost know them?

Hum. Know them! Curse them, my
heart rends

Itself well-nigh from out its bosom's seat
To gaze on them whose friendships prove
defeat

To my well-laid designs. What is their
will?

Sebas. Why, canst thou ask? Our will
is thee to kill

Unless thou canst disprove the monstrous
guilt

Beneath the which thy life is now o'er-
shadowed.

If thou canst prove thine innocence, our
will

Will be to reinstate thee once again

In our heart's kindest favor.

Hum. Thou art kind,

Exceeding, gracious kind. But look to
this:

Thy kindness is my hate ungraciously
bestowed

Upon my gracious friends. Dost know
its weight?

What if it so disposes me to meet

Nor one, nor other of your harsh de-
mands,

But rather fold myself in silent mood
To kindle wrath with exasperation's food,

That oft doth fire revenge when words
will not;

Methinks 'twould better suit this death-
still grot.

Sebas. And better suit thyself since
now to speak

Thy speech must issue from betwixt foul
lips,

Sprung from a murderer's heart to strike
our ears,

From thence our hearts to vengeance and
defense.

Devil, man-fiend, thy guilt lies on thy
face,

Nor words, nor silence can hide thy dis-
grace.

Thou must, therefore, now answer for
thy sin

To man for sake of man, to hearts within.
Then thy soul perjured, fly to heaven's

realm,
There meet thy fate, great God thee
overwhelm.

Theo. O, uncle, is this thou? I know
thee not,

Confined in chains, imprisoned in this
grot

To answer for so grievous-toned a charge,
Preferred by thy once friends who did

enlarge
Till now without one set-exception'd

soul,
Upon thy virtues voiced without cajole.

What motive prompted thee, how thou
hadst heart

To raise thy hand 'gainst fellow-man,
depart

From thine old honor and thy wonted
pride,
To lower thyself with such vice side by
side,
My droveled thoughts refuseth me to
teach:
O, uncle, why didst thou this? I thee
beseech.

Hum. The clankings of these chains
thou seest here
Shackling my feet and hands is my
tongue's talk.

What do they say? Humphrey's a mur-
derer

Intent upon a deed he now regrets
The weakness of his will and hand post-
poned

The swift achievement of. What dost
thou say,

Thou infant, for whose own advantage, I,
Thy graceless uncle, resting now 'neath
the wrath

Of his indignant friends, would have
freed thee

Of the only living rival estranging thee
From thy high hopes of future happi-
ness?

And now thou sayest, O, uncle, I do not
know thee;

And, O, uncle, why hadst thou this vile
deed

In thy heart? Must I then say 'twas
love

I bore my nephew? Then all the world
might say

And speak in just surprise: Humphrey's
a fool

To have it in his heart to strike for one
In whose behalf no booty could be won,
But that from one poor nephew of poor
worth,

Who had not heart to woo nor win a lady,
Staid on all sides by kind and willing
hands,

To set him to a cause his own, not theirs,
Yet theirs, not his; for he is naught, but
they,

Their lives, their honor, and their souls
at stake,

That now they've lost, must their re-
ward here take.

Theo. And dost thou not deserve what
thou wilt get?

I had a strange uneasiness at heart
Which was of other make than that of
love's,

That as the hour drew nigh for thy return
And thou camest not, I straightway set me
forth.

I could not stay to be a prey to thoughts
So sore conflicting as those that were
mine.

But ne'er did I expect to find thee here,
Disgraced, dishonored, sham'd, cowed
with deep fear.

Methought, perchance, being my embas-
sador,

Thou had'st through love for me done
even more

Than thy strength warranted, with this
in mind

I came to search for thee, came thee to
find;

But I would I'd not found thee, finding
thee

In such disgrace and sin. God pity thee.

Ant. Wherefore hast thou strayed from
us in this freak!

O, Humphrey, to us who would trust
thee, speak.

'Tis not with ease we thus give up a
friend,

Nor will we lest he cannot him defend.

Thy fault is great, a grievous fault to all,
But sore to me; my mother's heart doth
call

Aloud for vengeance. Canst thou not
explain

Thine actions? Then thou must in truth
be slain.

Hum. Madam, the honor thou and thy
kindred kith

Did ever think in me had resting place
Was but an honor to thyself a myth;

To me a policy to carry which
I oft did play deceit and guile on thee,

Watching how proud thy credulous eyes
beheld

What to them was a beauteous virtue set,
Though what in truth was virtue's coun-
terfeit,

Which thou had'st not the wisdom to
detect,

And place deterioration on its base,
But to adorn it with thy favored grace.

Ant. O, thou hast been too honest,
good, and true

For me to well believe that thou could'st
do

A deed so brutish as this for the which
Thou'rt held to answer here.

Hum. Once I was rich,
And being rich had no occasion then

To play my dormant guiles on fellow-
men.

But now poor, beggared, bankrupt that
I am,

To so retrieve my fortunes I would damn
Not one, but one one thousand infidels,

And send them to a thousand burning
hells.

Ant. This is not Humphrey but a devil
turned.

Sebas. And being devil should with them be spurned.

Hum. And but for why? Because the crisis proved

A circumstantial fate from me unmoved. Well, I was once as gracious in thy sight As thou art in the sight of heaven's eye; And had'st thou been but asked by an unknown

Who is the fairest man in thy esteem, Thou would'st as lief have said Sir Humphrey was,

As any of thy knowledge in the world.

Is't strange, then, to thee that I now stand furled

In such predicament, that for want of grace,

Disgrace confuses me, blushes my face? Is't all so strange that cloudless skies on high

Become o'er-cast of sudd'en, to the eye Present a quick-wrought aspect, as amazed

We shudder, viewing that on which we gazed

Now bright, now set in gloom, whose visage changed

From smiles to frowns, mysteriously arranged

Even thus—being heedless in some passing wiles—

Ere we do know of it, as though for smiles

Contentment to us bringing, it were wrought

To wrest laugh from a happy, joyous thought?

Now, let me be these skies, you they that gaze;

Canst thou condemn the skies, their sombre haze,

When thou art to the skies what they to thee

Would be to me were they thee and thou me?

Lub. O, listen to the false-cored arguer;

He will if let preach himself out of hell.

Sebas. And make us all, like him, gross hypocrites.

Come, wretch, thou art not longer fit to live,

Since thou hast by thine acts made thyself known

To the world, as God hath ever known thee.

Guards, seize upon the man, conduct him thence—

Hum. Not yet! Away! Is there a fool of ye

Quite fool enough to brave swift certain death?

Well, if there be, advance.

[Plucks a dagger from out his raiment.

For by the all

Immortal gods that do preside o'er all

The destinies of fools, I'll plunge this knife,

Even to its hilt, in the first of ye that dare

Lay dastard's fear-faint fingers upon me.

Ant. O, woful is this night!

End. Hark to the man!

Ades. O, madam, there will be worser trouble here,

Than we did ever once look for, I fear.

Hum. Orestes, come thou to me; come closer yet!

Why, dost thou fear me too? Art thou a fool

That to the name of traitor thou dost add A little better name than its consort,

To spice it to a readier mode of wit, Or to a quicker doom? Why, this doth fit

Thy double-name and doth give honor to it.

[Stabs him.

Then take thou all the honor thou canst stand,

That death may be a glory not a pang.

[Stabs him twice more. He falls.

That as in life thou hast a traitor proved, Thou mayst in death from thyself be removed.

Let death award thee all his honors pluck'd

From Humphrey's store—sweet honor's from him suck'd

By thy tenacious tentacles of love, Which take their root not in a heart of love,

But that to serve me falsely to this end; So die, that if I must, I'll with thee spend

Eternity in hell.

[Orestes dies.

Sebas. O, fiend! O, fiend!

Guards, watch thy time; launch forth with steady aim

Thy javelins swift to kill and not to maim.

Ger. Yet hold! Such intent from his act now stay.

Let me upon the fiend my sorcery play; For such an act becomes my innate skill

More surely than it does ye him to kill. Let justice take her course in thy just court;

Let me take him to justice; on him sport My power and mine art to thus reduce

Him to a numbness: guard ye from abuse Such as this rendered yon poor murdered

tool,

Who though did die a death quite due the fool,

Died falsely accus'd, a martyr to the cause

I now defend with all my might; so
 pause,
 The spell not to dispel, or we may lose
 All that we've won by our late well-
 worked ruse.

Hum. Thou fool! Dost thou think
 thou canst sorcer me?

Methinks myself, I can a sorcerer be.

Ger. To what effect? The devil from
 the God

Can wrest no virtue save that gained by
 fraud,

Which is a virtue teem'd from hell's
 worst pit,

Found in no heart but that of a hypocrite.

Hum. Look to thine art.

Ger. And thou; look
 thou to thine.

Thou wilt ere long be safely meshed in
 mine.

Hum. Why, death were better than this
 mimic death;

A thousand deaths than that to follow it.
 Hell hath no terrors, heaven no beau-
 teous charm

To stay my hand, death gives no dread
 alarm.

So ere thy spell can on me fully gain
 Its hold, in death I refuge hope, disdain

Thy petty, paltry power to beguile.
 There there, this feeling strange my

sense doth guile

Like very sleep that doth o'er-power me;
 My faculties to numbness grow; I see

As through a haze, and in my deadened
 ears

Come far-off sounds to list to which great
 tears

Of mortal dread well to my heavy eyes.
 Now death be kind; waft me beyond the

skies!

[*Stabs himself and falls on the body of Orestes.*

Here do I lie on my once loyal friend;
 Here do I die to meet his self-same end.

[*Dies.*

Ant. O, piteous sight! Are we grown
 mad, bewitched?

My heart appalled stands still, then is it
 twitched

To flighty palpitations. I grow faint.

[*Swoons.*

Alph. Lo, look! The hermit!

Ger. Friends, pray
 steady me.

Set me upon the ground from off my
 state.

I feel swift death approaching me. There
 wait!

This mighty struggle, these events to-
 night

Have played so sorely on my vested
 might,

That now beneath the ordeal I succumb.
 Soon I will be to earth as cold and dumb
 As Humphrey and Orestes are. But hark!
 I fear not death; to on her sea embark
 In God's celestial argosy which sails
 Swift, sure, and straight to God, stayed
 not by gales.

Farewell to all! May Roderick ever live
 The pride of all, to chaste Eudora give
 What chastity deserves; his father,
 mother, friends,
 Reward in goodly traits and noble ends.

[*Dies.*

Lub. A noble soul thus takes its flight
 on high;

O, what an easy death do christians die;
 What bitter throes has death when 't
 comes to vice;

'The wage of sin is death,' a bitter price.
 [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Bed Chamber of Roderick.*

Enter RODERICK and ALPHONSO.

Rod. What say'st thou of the night,
 Alphonso?

Alph. Why, I did have a brutish-na-
 tur'd dream,

Most singular and horrid were its wefts
 Of tragic fantasies, which, woven in
 My dream-craz'd brain, wrought me
 asunder from
 My native self, and left me quite dis-
 tract.

Rod. Thou always wert a timid-minded
 youth,

So I would say it staid thee to thyself,
 Away from foreign moods of valiancy.
 But there; I, too, did dream. What was
 thy dream?

Perchance thine will shed particles of
 light to mine,

And aid me to interpret its significance.

Alph. Well, I did dream that in some
 hell-like spot—

Rod. There! In these very words
 would I begin

My dream. How like!

Alph. Sir Humphrey, being

accus'd
 Of some dark hidden treachery, just

brought
 To notice of the world, accused in turn

His friend, Orestes, of being traitor to
 Some secret work of theirs, that, there-
 upon,

Ere intuition had time to anticipate,
 Or hand to stay, the fiend did stab

Orestes

Once, twice, thrice, in his most vital
 parts,

That death did follow instantly.

Rod. In sooth,
A brutish dream, though one I would
were true.

But stay, there's some connection in this
dream

Of thine, which links itself to mine, yet
what

It is I cannot say. Pray thread thy
dream

To its most final end.

Alph. I cannot thread it to its final
end;

For I have not the will to delve to where
The souls of Humphrey and Orestes
blend,

I'm safest far away from this foul pair.

Rod. Come, 'tis but a dream, and this
the hour of day.

Why does thy shivering aspen body shake
At merest fantasy.

Alph. What! Have you not heard?
My dream of yesternight, to-day con-
fronts me

As a vivid truth, and I have seen
The bodies of Sir Humphrey and Orestes,
Gazed on the silent tongueless testimo-
nies

Of their death, whose blood-red, gapping
lips

Smiled sickly back to my dazed, sickly
eyes,

As though they, famishing, grimly
smirked at me

To put a drop of water 'twixt the twain,
To stay the oozing of that gory froth.

Rod. And this thou say'st is true?

Alph. Ay, true as truth,
As that truth which the eye gives to the
mind,

When other wits fail other truths to find,
Yet finding, find them all so false un-
couth,

Truth had been better falsehood, false-
hood truth.

Rod. And thou hast seen them both?

Alph. Their bodies, ay;
Their ghastly wounds that on their bodies
lie,

Which robbed them of their hypocritic
souls,

And sent them to their doom.

Rod. What heart condole
The two deceased fools?

Alph. None; who would mourn
Two such perfection's villains past the
bourn,

Whose exit from this life is but the grave,
Through which all men must pass, from
king to knave.

Rod. True, true; the man that mourns
the hypocrite,

The name doth him quite perfectly befit.
But did'st thou dream all this?

Alph. All this and more.
When Humphrey, having struck Orestes
dead,

Plung'd with his murderous hand the
dripping knife

Into his own bare breast, why lo! me-
thought

Old satan standing there, did, wanning,
die

With these words on his lips spoke in
death's sigh:

The infidel in hades dwells,

The hypocrite also;

To earth I bid my last farewells,

To hell I also go!

With that I woke, right glad was I to
wake

From such a dream that gave me such a
shake.

Rod. But where draw'st thou the bor-
der line of truth,

And where the line of dream?

Alph. Truth's line I draw when dreams
cease to be truth,

When you God doth redeem.

Rod. There, there, you knave you,
what a witty one

Hast thou turned out to be!

Alph. Not half so witty as the witty sun
Which shines on you and me.

Rod. Well go, lead thou the way to him
that's slain;

I would the truth perceive.

Alph. Ay! ay! my lord, but guage your
addled brain,

Lest you your eyes deceive. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. Chamber in Humphreys house
containing his bier and remains.

Enter RODERICK and ALPHONSO.

Rod. From in this warm-lit chamber
come to me,

As if from off amphibian shores, betwixt
Cold-natured north and hot-distemper'd

south,
Strange-laden breaths which chill me to a

sweat,
And tell me, ere I see it, death is here—

Why, there it lies upon its solemn bier.
Thou poor, lost soul, how poor thy body

looks
Deprived of thee; how pale, how wan it

looks!
Thy tongue inserted in its futchel groove,

Now idly falls deprived of power to move,
As it has erstwhile done, good easy

hearts
To meet thy will; thy power from thee

departs.
And did I stand before thy animate form?

And did I lift my hand to strike thee
 down
 But yesterday? Then what see I to-day?
 Thy soul aborted out of mortal clay,
 Leaves but the clay for mortal eyes to
 see.
 O God, I pray this soul from hell to free!
 There there, how quick we turn from
 hate to love,
 When death has severed us from that
 we'd love!
 How soon our hearts are willing to for-
 give
 That which death claims, he whom whilst
 he did live
 We did antagonize in bitter strife!
 Alas! alas! what bitter hates has life;
 And what a bitter thing is life itself
 Whose government is malice, God is pelf;
 And life so short, uncertain, an unknown;
 We are but fools upon a flimsy throne.
 Like phantoms wrought about in grossest
 scrawl
 Upon the beams of a dust-begrimmed
 wall,
 Which breathed upon by passing breath
 of God
 Outwits recapture; so we go to God.
 Stay! say I now to God when yesternight
 I sought my sleep disdaining such a
 might?
 There, there, the dream, the hideous,
 horrid dream!
 O God, through it, Thou did'st my soul
 redeem.
 How plain to me is't now in arguments
 Which place their truths before my
 mind's credence.
 What painter's hand's so steady without
 rest
 That it can trace the film-fine lines that
 crest
 In subtle finish portraitures of queens,
 But that to daub their backgrounds with
 coarse scenes?
 Did ever man become within himself
 So conscious-perfect, that, as in-wrought
 delf
 Upon the glaz'd face of the ancient cup,
 Which sparkles in the eyes of them that
 sup
 From off its gilded rim, he can, likewise,
 Emit perfection through soft, courteous
 eyes,
 Unaided, unsupported by a power
 More powerful than that of human dower?
 As babe depends upon its mother's breast,
 So man, God's child, through Christ,
 God's poor bruin'd breast,
 Upon whose pap this infant world doth
 hang,

Receives his nourishment. O, what a
 pang
 Doth mother's puking babe oft give her
 soul,
 As it, unconscious, offers no condole,
 Save that in mocking, babe-bewitching
 eyes,
 As they, beneath, peer up in their dear
 skies,
 So radiant set in smiles—a mother's love
 Which beams down on her babe through
 eyes above.
 O, what a pang we babes upon the earth
 Give heaven-mother from our very
 birth;
 That heart's first babe's conception of a
 thing
 Pertains to evil and doth evil bring
 Upon our heads—chastisement from our
 God,
 Which covers up remaining good to laud.
 Thus I, believing, I my heart to prove,
 Now here beneath my heaven and my
 God,
 Look down upon this sombrous-laden
 bier,
 'Twixt two eternities of life and death,
 And swear allegiance to my living God,
 And consecrate my soul in peace to God.
 [Exit.

SCENE III. *Room in Eudora's house.*

Enter EUDORA, ADESSA, SEBASTIAN, AN-
 TONIA, LUBIN, THEOPHILUS and
 Attendants.

Theo. Nay, hear me, Lady Eudora,
 whilst I speak:
 After these hard experiences of the night,
 That have reduced us all to sore distress,
 I tell thee freely and with honest heart
 That which but yesterday ne'er did I
 think
 I could recount to thee with willing mind.
 If thou would'st say my love is insincere,
 My reconciliation lives too near
 Behind thy coldly-spoke refusing speech,
 Which smote mine ears like notes of
 hell's discord,
 My heart like death, my soul to madness
 plung'd,
 Let such a thought supplanted be by this;
 That loving thee still do I love my God;
 That loving God am so beloved by Him;
 That loving God and thee love thee not
 less,
 But God the more which softens mine for
 thee,
 And balms my soul 'gainst thine withheld
 from me;
 That if for thee love still lurk in my soul,
 I turn with it to God me to condole.

Ne'er shall I harbor aught but good toward thee,

Thus may I prove my deep sincerity.

End. In proving this thou provest thyself most noble,
That as thou stand'st before my troubled eye,

I see within thee more traits to admire,
Which traits I trust in thee will never die.
'Tis my regretful heart by means of tongue

Regretful as my heart that tells thee this,
That I fain would have loved thee for thy worth,

Had not my love been pruned in me at birth,

Directed from this source to another head
By this same God thou lov'st, I also love,
Who, too, loves me as thee, who loves all men,

Who loves him whom I love, has him re-deemed

From darkness unto light, a thing that seemed

To us till now past all accomplishment
Worked out by us, our wits upon him spent.

'Tis well thou find'st thy solace in this One

Who has thee soothed, who has my joys begun.

Theo. I would thy joys brought by laborious birth,
Bring lesser burdening brothers to thy hearth.

End. For this thou hast my life-long gratitude.

Theo. And thou hast mine: let mine give thy joys food.

But there, Antonia speaks.

Ant. My lady!

End. What would The good prostrate Antonia have? Dost languish

For that I have not, but say the word
And I'll research my secretest resorts,
And bring from thence my rarest, best delights,

If but thy present testy whims to please,
Thy tired limbs reclaim.

Ant. I crave one boon.
My heart doth languish for one single thing,

Which, when I it possess, thou wilt, thyself,

Be less thyself but more to me, me thee,
Than thou hast e'er yet been, or I to thee,

In my heart's mew'd desires.

End. Do I possess This thing that would give thee thy boon?

Why, if it be my very life 'twere thine
But for the asking of it.

Ant. O gracious one,
How fair thou art; how noble is thy gift!
Thy gift as noble as thyself art fair,
Thyself as fair as thou art graciously
Disposed to humor me. Come sit by me,
And like a mother I will be to thee,
Thee unto me what thou wert wont to be
Were I thy mother in affinity.

End. And thee to me what thou wert wont to be

Were I thy daughter in affinity.

Methinks this were a gift not mine to give,

But rather 'tis another's who doth live
Estranged still from us, our love's defense;

O, would I had relief from this suspense!
[*Kneels beside Lady Antonia.*]

Sebas. There, thou art now within thy rightful place;

No grace from heaven e'er fell with such a grace

Into my famished soul as thou hast knelt
With grace unto thy matron. Ne'er have I felt

A deeper joy than this that's greater joy
Than that the great'st through my re-deemed boy.

End. Why, if redeem'd, does thy son tarry so?

Sebas. Why when reproach'd, do children shamed grow?

End. Susceptible is child to petty things.

Sebas. So this great change remorse to manhood brings.

So do all righted wrongs in human heart
Bring deep regret when they from it depart.

End. Yet now methinks had I been infidel

Awakened to such love from such a hell
As thy son Roderick hath, I'd haste me to—

Not from my eager friends, their pardon sue

For being so ungrateful to them all,
Who first to last did stand steadfast as Paul

To Christ did stand.

Sebas. List to impatience talk,
Wherein poor woman hath not time to hawk

Herself into one hurried word to say
Her griefs untold: impatience leads the way.

End. Impatience then hath much the nobler part

Than hath a woman with an anxious heart.

Enter ALPHONSO, singing.

Alph. O cheery, cheery is my way;
The moon is sun, the night is day,
The day is here and so am I;
My master's coming by and by!

Sebas. What ho, Alphonso! Where's thy master now?

Leave off thy singing, tell us where, and how,

And when thou leftest him.

Alph. Where? At Sir Humphrey's;
over Sir Humphrey's bier,
Tall and straight and white as that bier's epitaph,

And had he words inscribed what he did say,

On his broad front, whilst standing rigid there,

A very walking epitaphic man

Would my griev'd master be.

Sebas. Since when was this?

Alph. When that point of the finger of the clock

Struck my departure thence, hence, here from him;

Nor could that clock outspeed me in my pace,

For whilst I ran it moved but thrice its face.

Sebas. How seemed his mood when thou didst leave him there?

Alph. He seemed as cheerless as the sun is fair.

Sebas. Seemed he to have been changed, his soul's sin rinc'd?

Alph. Ay! seem'd confused, confuted, and convinc'd.

Sebas. Think'st thou, Alphonso, conviction also reigns

Within his heart?

Alph. If you had seen what pains Remorse his conscience did inflict, you would

Not ask. Imagine all ye how he stood,
With one bare arm raised high toward heaven's dome,

As though to pluck from heaven a little love

To warm him to a purpose yet too young
To totter in its peevish infancy.

The other hand was laid upon the wound
Where did the knife plunge in Sir Humphrey's breast,

Wielded by Sir Humphrey's hand. In this style

Of sacred-poised attitude did he

Swear unto God and heaven in deep refrain,

An oath to cherish God, all else disdain.

Ant. O, this is news, Eudora, news for thee

As well as for a mother. O, to see

This new-made son of mine, my heart doth crave.

God hath been good to me my son to save.

Eud. And me a husband to endow with grace.

What would I give to gaze upon his face,
Which has till now been to mine eyes a mask,

To view the which has been a cruel task.

Sebas. Hast aught else yet to tell us, Alphonso,

Touching thy master's state?

Alph. Naught, sir, but that The which if breath'd aloud may seem,

perchance,
A trifle past the door of modesty,

O'er-stept beyond the chamber of reserve,

Into the lodgement of a fool's self-praise.

Sebas. Why, 'tis a fool, indeed, that from self-praise

His foolery doth find. Art thou in love?

Alph. Is love a braggart's plea?

Sebas. Ay, it is man's best hope to praise in love

Great deeds of valor he himself hath done:

Thus lovers are made fools, fools lovers are.

Art thou in love? then thou art worser fool.

Therefore speak thou a lover's foolish praise;

Give us more cheer in setting love ablaze
As she doth set her ears to catch the drift
Of thy account; thus palsy any shift
She may have mind to practice on thy sense,

Thyself to shield at thy love's dear expense.

Alph. Well, 'tis a wise fool wisely fools his lady,

And turns pert pique to pining, makes cheeks fady.

Now hark ye all! Methinks had not my wit

Been by me brought to play upon my master

With well selected points of argument,
He yet were infidel. 'Twas in this wise:

What I did see last night, to-day I put
In form of dream my master's ears to please,

Whilst we his morning toilet did arrange.
The nature of this dream did so compare
With that of his, that he, struck with remorse,

Quick importun'd me thence to Humphrey's bier,

Where he did follow, gave himself to God,
Invoking mercy on poor Humphrey's soul.

Sebas. Why! didst thou this? Then let love to love speed;
For 'tis an act the which true love should meet.

Adessa, greet thy lord; shun thou not him.
Alphonso—

Alph. Greet thy lady! Is love a whim?
[*They embrace*] O, no, no, no! 'Tis not a whim with me.

How is't with thee, Adessa, is't so with thee?

Ades. And if it is, it is a whim to stay;
For I bethink me I am here to stay.

Alph. Dost thou not comfort find in thy new world?

Ades. Ay, should I not with it about me furl'd?

Alph. Then comfort never shall from thee depart,
As long as strength remain or beats my heart.

End. So two loves thus at last are now united;
God grant my love will likewise be requited.

Alph. I would it were if woman feel like man,
Methinks I'll burst so full of joy I am.

Ades. Then pray release me; thou art yet too green
To burst near me. If I'm to be thy queen,
Let mellow age burst ope thy heart for joy,
Rather than that of a flighty inconstant boy.

Alph. Now this to love is worst of all rebuffs.
Worse, ay! indeed, than ruthless kicks and cuffs.

Love's vanity sets well astride love's neck,
That when 'tis wounded, love grows vainless, meek,
And makes that man which boy professed to be,
A boy which woman does not deign to see.

Sebas. Rash fool, be thou content!
Dost thou not know
When thou hast gained a vict'ry o'er a foe?
Know then that thou hast vanquished this fair one
As sure as she hath thee thy woes begun.

Enter RODERICK, reluctantly.

Rod. Doth Roderick here intrude upon his friends?
If be let his withdrawal make amends.

Sebas. Nay, come within, thy presence may amuse us,

Since by thine absence thou dost so abuse us.

Rod. 'Tis not, I know, objection to a clan

That gives objection to a certain man,
So much as 'tis objection to the one
That proves bad scion of a household's son.

I'm come, my friends, not Roderick of old,
But Roderick the christian, strong and bold.

If any ask: 'Is Roderick infidel?'
Say answer 'no!' and on the answer dwell

Until the sound ta'en up by its echo,
Might swell the heavens with its mighty flow.

Let this be its purport, its loud refrain,
That Roderick's christian turned ne'er to profane

The name of God again whilst life doth last;

Thus doth he from his quondam self now cast.

What is a man who in himself doth claim
The highest order of a being? Fame
And all her vast accoutrements attached
Are naught compared with God whose might's unmatched.

He who disclaims his God his sire denies;
For God is sire whence all life doth arise.
So trace ancestry back to very first
And you find God alone ere man's tongue curst,

Or man's unhallowed presence brought disgrace
Into the world through woman's tempting grace.

So friends, if you'll forgive a fool his fad,
The fool, returning, will make friends right glad.

Ant. O, this is Roderick, sweet as when a child;

The other devil was, both rude and wild.

Sebas. We greet thee, son, as mother, father dear:

Thou hast in sooth made glad our hearts with cheer.

Lub. And thou hast caused thy friends to honor thee,

That may'st contend who'll greatest donor be.

Theo. Let me be first to grant thee my good-will,
For cheating me my love of Humphrey's will.

Alph. And me my master to assure with joy:

Love is a sterner master, yet more coy.

Ades. And me my master's master to forewarn;

Beware thy lady who might thee yet scorn.

Rod. Why, this were like returning friends, indeed,
But for one lacking which stands me in need.

Look I which way I might I see a friend
Who would, methinks, my purpose strong defend.

There heart, art thou not yet content with this?

What is this something that my heart doth miss?

'Tis like surroundings of an infant's joy
That doth, repleted, fret for some new toy.

Eud. Let me be this and thou the infant be;

Take thou thy toy, do what you will with me.

This is a moment I have worked and prayed for,

And now 'tis come, sweet issue of my labor;

A supplication heard and granted me,
'Tis thus O God I give my thanks to Thee;

And thus, my king, my one love, and my hope,

I give myself to thee no more to grope
Beyond affection's glow.

Rod. O sweet, sweet love!
How did I live so long without thy love?

Nay, heaven ne'er harbor'd angel half so pure

As this that earth doth hold who must endure

Earth's sufferings, disappointments, trials, woes,

Which come as friends through worst of hateful foes.

Canst thou, Eudora, loving, pardon too?
This, as thy love, I now most humbly sue;

For love were joyless which cannot forgive

The faults of him for whom the love doth live.

Eud. Roderick, I do pardon thee with all my heart,

As I thee truly love with all my heart.
Ay, pardon opes the way to greater love,

Whilst love puts pardon in with gentle shove.

So there they stand both pardon and affection,

Neither the plainer to thy close inspection.

Rod. Methinks were mine eyes blind,
I now could see

How truly thou dost love and pardon me.
Then what if I were blind, my sight were dead,

Then love would grow by instinct's touch instead.

The nestle of a hand arousing me
To tender thoughts of sweetest ecstasy,

Would love expand to burst a happy heart,

Like buds of rare impatiens that impart
Rich odors to the nostrils by a touch,

My very blindness framing love to such
A soft, deep, hallowed, gentle-natured thing,

That now to see is but that love doth bring

Unto my soul a thousand added pleasures;
More wealth to me than all great Lydia's treasures.

Eud. But how fared you the night, methinks thy look,

Though brighter now, speaks thus:
'Sweet sleep forsook

Mine eyes last night, and left me weary very.'

Rod. Perchance the night was bad to make me merry,

Which now I am upon this day of days;
For one more soul hath turned from

darksome ways,
To greet requiting love whose light to me

Is that of light from God that shines through thee,

The radiating means of life and hope.
So like thyself I will no longer grope

Beyond affection's glow, but rather live
For thee, with thee, in part, of thee to give

Unto thy worthy life its just reward
In gentle husband, I, thy chosen lord.

Eud. This is in sooth a just reward to me,

Possessing it, my heart from woe is free.

Enter SALMON.

Sal. Halloa! Halloa! Where's my master? Ho!

Theo. Here! Salmon! Here!

Sal. Here where! Ho master, Ho! Your Salmon calls.

Theo. Cease strumpeting thy wind! What is thy grief?

Sal. 'Tis that, my master, rescued from a thief.

Theo. Then thou must needs be bound in iron chains,

For rescuing such base dishonest gains.

Sal. 'Twere well Sir Humphrey is not here to hear

You threaten one who brings news withal so dear.

Theo. What has thy news to do with one now dead?

Sal. What has a wife to do with husband's bed?

Theo. Not duty dead to husband's wed-gain'd dues.

Sal. Nor is Sir Humphrey dead to my gain'd news.

Theo. Come come, thou prating fool, hast thou not learned

Sir Humphrey is no more: nor yet discerned

As much by aspect of his dwelling-place,
Which now stands mantled, draped from
roof to base

In token of his death?

Sal. What say you sir?

Doth know you on yourself a boon confer?

And is Sir Humphrey dead in truth or jest?

If jest 'twere sad; if truth you're truly blest.

Theo. Methinks all earth were blest in Humphrey's death.

Sal. And hell, if dead, for he hath devil's breath;

But you the most. Sir Humphrey that was poor,

By sudden turn of fortune now is rich.
All that vast moneys ventured forth in trade

Some two years since hath now returned in full,

Whose present gross sum stands equivalent

To thrice that ventured. This in course of custom

Must needs by Humphrey's death fall to next blood,

Which you, my master, fortunate to be
The honest nephew of dishonesty,
Stand undisputed claimant to.

Lub. How now,

Most lucky man, thine uncle favors thee
In dying at such opportune a time

To thy advantage, else had his foul hand
Not stabbed the life from out its tenancy
Of clay, thou still wert destitute.

Theo. There, there,

Say rather 'twas not uncle but mere tide
Of circumstance, unfashion'd, uncontroll'd

By man's hand, but by interposing hand of God.

And so as God hath fashioned this to me,
I in my turn will fashion it to others.

No use have I of wealth more than I have,

But that in false pursuit to pleasures buy,
Which oft to swift damnation's doom doth lead.

Therefore 'twere better not to grasp thus much

Above that I am now possessor of.

Methinks did not heart scorn, my hands would burn,

Or hands not burn, my soul would rise abhor'd

From out so miserly a tenement,
The home of lust and fleshly-crav'd desires,

And I would soon be where Sir Humphrey is,

Whose destiny for him himself did carve,
Did I accept this wealth which I need not.

Therefore I say I'll lay no claim to it,
But in the cause of charity, bequeath

Even here whilst I refuse it, half the which

To Salmon my good servant for his need,
The other to Alphonso and Adessa,

To be by them disbursed in way they choose:

The which by testament and seal of law,
I'll straightway have confirm'd and sanctioned.

Rod. Most noble man, most generous is thy heart.

'Tis fit example for one that now doth start

Upon the self-same way. I note the deed
To stay me to my course, right's cause to

follow.

Sal. O master, rob you 'f your gain to furnish me?

I cannot take what does not fall to me.

Theo. But thou canst take what is as much thine own

As mine, which though mine to disburse at will,

Thine 'tis by right of gift from me to thee,
Which is a greater than that which is mine,

Since none did give me what I give to thee,

That's only mine by merest passing chance,

Which if I took might vanish even so
To leave me in worse plight than ere before.

That ne'er possessed ne'er can be taken from,

So now I give that ne'er to me did come.

Sal. I thank you, master, poor is such return;

Tears choke my speech, speech seems my mouth to burn.

Ades. What your man speaks, speaks thus my grateful heart.

Alph. And mine, for it becomes Alphonso's part.

Theo. Then I'm repaid: meet me at eventide

The deeds to sign, our actions coincide.

Rod. Come sweet Eudora, say we wed to-day.

Why would'st thou wait? Is not thy heart as gay

Now as 'twil be upon the morrow?

Eud. Well,
Let it be so, but hark thou to my warn-
ing,

There'll be no fawning, frowning, fret-
ting, scorning.

Rod. I warrant thee there'll not, else I
love not,

Which, God be sworn unto, I do, I do.

Ades. O lady, mark my prophesy; 'tis
as I said:

This very night you'll have your love to
bed.

Eud. And why not you have yours to
bed as well,

Thereby thy fortune also to foretell.

Alph. Why, what a tongue I have to
speak for me!

Speak on, glib organ! Let thy speech
win me

That which this lolling luscious thing of
mine

Which I call tongue cannot speak words
to win.

Ades. 'Tis well for thee that others
speak for thee,

Else might have I refused to lie with
thee.

Alph. Then thou consentest: let this
be thy joy;

I'll show thee I'm no flighty inconstant
boy.

Sebas. Doth aught still lack, then take
my blessings both,

To stint the which I feel extremely loth.
Then come, let's quick prepare the nup-
tial feast

To banquet love until the day hath
ceas'd,

That coming night may court us to our
beds,

Each bettered by the past night's goodly
deeds.

Rod. Soft, stay a moment! Where
doth Orestes lie?

Sebas. Upon the spot where he did fall
and die.

'Twas his life's wish, being born, bred,
mountaineer

To be interred upon his mountains dear:
So 'twas arranged according to his will;

There he doth sleep death's sleep forever
still.

Rod. Poor perjur'd soul! How my
heart bleeds for him!

Well, well, 'tis past recall; but had I life
To so infuse within his lifeless corse,

Though it did take mine out of mine own
self,

Quick would I do it, dying, give him life,
That he, respited, might redemption find,

Which I do fear he died deprived of,
And meets accorded punishment in hell.

Therefore do I take it as precedent,
To set my purpose to a higher hope,

By which example I might bettered be
To serve intent, and solve death's mys-
tery.

[*Exeunt.*]

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